

## **APPENDIX G – Public Hearing Summary and Transcript**



ONE COMPANY  
*Many Solutions*<sup>SM</sup>

# Public Hearing Summary Report

To:	Jim Lee, PE / HDR Project Manager		
From:	Eric Jefferson, PE	Project:	Tupelo, MS RR Relocation Planning Study and EIS
CC:	Carnot Evans, PE (HDR), Rhea Vincent, PE (MDOT), Kim Thurman (MDOT)		
Date:	September 28, 2011	Job No:	ABMB P.N. 2034

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# Tupelo Railroad Relocation Planning and Environmental Study Public Hearing Summary Report

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## Introduction

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) held briefings for city officials and a public hearing for the Tupelo Railroad Relocation Planning and Environmental Study. The purpose of the hearing was to give all interested parties an opportunity to learn about the status of the project and to comment on their concerns to MDOT. Both the briefings and the hearing were held on Thursday, August 11 in rooms 3, 4, and 5 at the BancorpSouth Arena at 375 East Main Street in Tupelo, Mississippi. The city officials' briefings were conducted from 1:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m., and the public hearing was held from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. This public hearing summary report documents these meetings and the comments captured.

## Pre-Hearing Publicity

The date of the hearing was included in the Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in the Federal Register that was issued on Thursday, July 14, 2011. A legal notice announcing the availability of the DEIS for public viewing and the date of the hearing was published in the Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal on July 10 and July 26, 2011. To further publicize the hearing, a print advertisement was published in the Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal on July 30 and August 5. A copy of the advertisement and the legal notice are included in **Appendix A** of this report.

Two articles about the project were found on the internet prior to the hearing:

**The Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal (NEMS360.COM).** *"Tupelo Rail Study Ends."* Last retrieved August 9, 2011 at [http://nems360.com/view/full\\_story/14971583/article-Tupelo-rail-study-ends?instance=commented](http://nems360.com/view/full_story/14971583/article-Tupelo-rail-study-ends?instance=commented)

**Mississippi Business Journal.** *"Officials to Unveil Findings of Railroad Study."* Last retrieved August 9, 2011 at <http://msbusiness.com/2011/08/officials-to-unveil-findings-of-railroad-study/>

## Staff

The following agency and consultant staff were in attendance during the local officials briefing and the public hearing.

Kim Thurman – MDOT  
Rhea Vincent – MDOT  
Sedrick Durr – MDOT  
John Underwood – MDOT  
Kenny Foote – MDOT  
Ralph Farrell – MDOT  
Juan Flores – MDOT  
Bill Jamieson – MDOT  
John Winkle – FRA

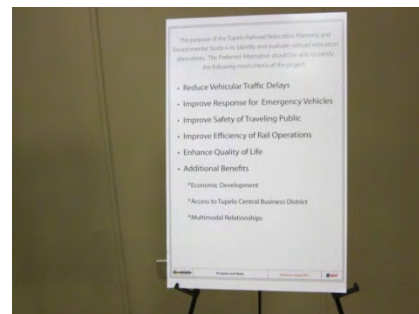
Jim Lee – HDR  
Carnot Evans – HDR  
John Morton – HDR  
Kevin Keller – HDR  
Tim Casey – HDR  
Cecil Vick – ABMB Engineers  
Eric Jefferson – ABMB Engineers  
Patricia Stallings – Brockington & Assoc.  
Brett Brooks – Cook Coggin Engineers

A copy of the staff sign-in sheet is included in **Appendix B** of this report. Not all of the persons listed above signed the sign-in sheet, but their presence was noted.

## Meeting Content

The following displays were presented at these meetings:

- Welcome Sign Board
- Purpose and Need Board
- Evaluation Matrix Board
- Impact Summary Board
- Build Alternative Renderings Board
- Alternative Alignments Overview Board
- In-Town Alternatives Overview Board
- The Build Alternative Board
- The Build Alternative Details (Table layout)



## Tupelo City Officials Briefing

Mr. Carnot Evans gave a formal presentation, including a video, in two separate briefings with the Mayor and a few council members. The first briefing began at 1:30 p.m. and was attended by Mayor Jack Reed and Councilpersons Mike Bryan and Markel Whittington. The second briefing began at approximately 2:30 p.m. and was attended by Mayor Jack Reed, and Councilpersons Nettie Davis and Willie Jennings. The briefings were conducted in a conference style, with a question and comment period following the technical presentation. The city officials were also encouraged to view the display boards and ask questions about them. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation can be found in **Appendix C**. A summary of the city official briefings is included in **Appendix D**.



## Public Hearing



The public hearing was conducted in an open house style from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., followed by a formal presentation/public testimony session beginning at 5:30 p.m., and then resumed an open house format until 7:00 p.m. The formal presentation was given by Carnot Evans beginning at 5:30 pm and lasted approximately 30 minutes. Attendees were asked to fill out a sign-in sheet at the entrance to the meeting room; the sign-in sheets are included in **Appendix B** of this report. Handouts that explained to the public the purpose of the meeting, the alternatives that were considered, the

Build Alternative, and how to provide comments to MDOT were available for attendees. A copy of the handout can be found in **Appendix C**. Comment cards were provided for written comments. The comment card included a self-mailer for participants who wanted to mail their comments at a later time. Persons who wished to express their opinions orally during the public testimony segment were asked to fill out and submit a speaker card to any member of the project team. The handouts also indicated that comments could be submitted until September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2011 including by mail, fax, or e-mail.

From the sign-in sheets, approximately 30 people attended the hearing, including members of the public, a representative from the KCS Railway, and elected officials. Written and verbal comments were received for this meeting. At the hearing, Cecil Vick of ABMB went around the room asking attendees about their concerns to determine how the public felt about the project; his summary is in **Appendix E**.

During the hearing, the public had an opportunity to give verbal comments following the technical presentation and also directly to a court reporter stationed at the hearing. The court reporter transcribed both the comments that were given to her directly and the comments openly expressed by attendees following the presentation. One person gave verbal comments directly to the court reporter, and nine people provided verbal comments after the presentation. The court reporter's transcript is included in **Appendix E**. The following is a synopsis of the verbal comments received during the hearing.

- The project is too expensive to build. How could it ever be funded?
- Concerns about potential safety issues with an elevated rail (derailments, flying debris).
- Concerns about the impacts on property values and historic resources such as Mill Village.
- Concerns about the aesthetic of the elevated rail sections; it won't blend with the surrounding built environment.
- Concerns about community cohesion; the elevated structure has the appearance of a wall that will further divide the city physically, socially, and psychologically.

In addition to formal comments given verbally at the public hearing, MDOT also accepted written comments on the comment cards that were provided at the hearing. Attendees were also informed that they could provide written comments via fax or email to MDOT. One person provided a letter to the court reporter, which is transcribed in the reporter's notes. Copies of all written comments are included in **Appendix F** of this report. There were 12 people who submitted written comments. Overall, the written comments tracked closely with the verbal comments described above, particularly the concerns about community cohesion and project cost. The comments submitted can be summarized as preferring the following:

No-build	2
Alternative L or J	2
Alternative M	2
Other preferences	6

From those characterized as having "other preferences", the comments ranged from suggesting that the crossings be double gated to silence the horns, to proposing that the rail line be located somewhere outside of Tupelo. There were a good mix of comments received for the Build Alternative both supporting and opposing it, but a predominant public opinion on the project could not be determined by these comments.

## APPENDIX A

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### PUBLISHED ADVERTISEMENT and LEGAL NOTICE



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, LEE COUNTY:

Personally appeared before me, DIANNE P. POWELL Notary Public,  
in and for said County and State, H. CLAY FOSTER, JR. Publisher of a  
newspaper printed and published in the City of Tupelo, Lee County, Mississippi, called The  
Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal, who being duly sworn, deposes and says that the publication  
of a certain notice, a true copy of which is hereunto attached, has been made in said newspaper for  
2 weeks consecutively to-wit:

Vol. 138 No. 101 Date July 10 2011

Vol. 138 No. 117 Date July 26 2011

Vol. \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_

Vol. \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_

Vol. \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_

Vol. \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_

26 July

Witness my hand and seal this 26 day

of July, 2011

Dianne P. Powell

My Commission expires \_\_\_\_\_



#23180

**LEGAL NOTICE**

LEGAL NOTICE FOR OPEN  
FORUM PUBLIC HEARING  
TUPELO RAILROAD  
RELOCATION  
LEE COUNTY

The Mississippi Department of Transportation in conjunction with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has scheduled a public hearing to discuss the proposed relocation of the BNSF Railway Company railroad through the city of Tupelo, MS. The hearing will take place from 4:00-7:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 11, 2011 at the BancorpSouth Arena, 375 Main Street, Tupelo, Miss.

Citizens are invited to come and go hearing with project team representatives to discuss location, right-of-way and environmental issues. Although there will be no provisions made for formal presentations by individuals or groups, citizens are encouraged to make written and/or taped comments that will become part of the hearing's permanent record.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement document will be available for public inspection at the Mississippi Department of Transportation Administrative Office Building, Environmental/Location Division, 401 North West Street, Jackson, MS; the MDOT First District Office, Tupelo, MS; the Lee County Chancery Clerk, Tupelo, MS; Tupelo City Hall, Tupelo, MS; Lee County Public Library, Tupelo, MS and the Federal Railroad Administration, Region 3, 61 Forsyth Street, SW, Suite 16720, Atlanta, GA 30303-3104.

Any individual who needs auxiliary aids or special accommodations to attend the hearing should call the MDOT Environmental Division at (601) 359-7920.

Kim Thurman,  
Environmental  
Administrator,  
Miss. Dept. of  
Transportation  
July 10, 26, 2011.

**PRINTERS FEES**

To 227 words at 22 Cents per word 49.94



Open Forum

052000

# PUBLIC HEARING



## TUPELO RAILROAD RELOCATION

Mississippi Department of Transportation in conjunction with Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has scheduled a public hearing to discuss the proposed relocation of the BNSF Railway any railroad through the city of Tupelo, MS. The hearing will place from 4:00-7:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 11, 2011 at BancorpSouth Arena, 375 Main Street, Tupelo, Miss.

Citizens are invited to come and go hearing with project team representatives to discuss location, right-of-way and environmental. Although there will be no provisions made for formal presentations by individuals or groups, citizens are encouraged to submit written and/or taped comments that will become part of the hearing's permanent record.

THE PUBLIC IS ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND

Thursday, August 11, 2011 4:00 - 7:00 pm  
BancorpSouth Arena  
375 East Main Street, Tupelo, Miss.

## APPENDIX B

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### SIGN-IN SHEETS

REGISTRATION SIGN-IN SHEET  
TUPELO RAILROAD (TUPELO, MS)  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 11, 2011 4:00-7:00 P.M.

(PLEASE PRINT)



NAME	ADDRESS	HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE PUBLIC HEARING
• Nettie Y. Davis	326 Barnes St. Tupelo, MS 38804	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other <u>Councilwoman City of Tupelo</u>
• Rick Franks	675 Lake Crest Drive Hoover, AL 35226	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
• Joyce C. Logan	106 Rankin Blvd. Tupelo, MS	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
• Brenda Crook	911 Jefferson Tupelo MS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
• Bill Martin	P.O. Box 1091 Tupelo, MS 38802	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
• Jim High	P.O. Box 467 Tupelo, MS 38802	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
• George Copen	1213 Zentwood Road Tupelo, MS 38801	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
• Malcolm Harden	297 Road 684 Tupelo, MS 38801	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
• Jacqui Settelier	119 CR 1684 Saltville, MS 38861	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____



REGISTRATION SIGN-IN SHEET  
TUPELO RAILROAD (TUPELO, MS)  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 11, 2011 4:00-7:00 P.M.

(PLEASE PRINT)



NAME	ADDRESS	HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE PUBLIC HEARING
• Karen Kenny	325 N Park St 38804	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
• Bill Smith	1139 Hidden Ave 38804	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
• Phyllis Lewis	P.O. Box 7061 Tupelo, MS 38802	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
• Dwayne H. Deas	645 Highland Circle Tupelo, MS 38804	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other
• Dale & Ralph Henderson	144 Rd. 784 Tupelo, MS 38801	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
• RUSSELL PESKO	1901 CARDINAL TUPELO MS 38801	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
•		<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
•		<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
•		<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other

REGISTRATION SIGN-IN SHEET  
TUPELO RAILROAD (TUPELO, MS)  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 11, 2011 4:00-7:00 P.M.

(PLEASE PRINT)



NAME	ADDRESS	HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE PUBLIC HEARING
• C W Jack	1015 Tyler Dr, Tupelo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
• Alvin Jack	1015 Tyler Dr, Tupelo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
• Carolyn Watson	216 Rankin Blvd. Tupelo,	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Television <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
• Jacques Platter	1824 JACKSON TYPAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
• Lawrence Stanley	2060 East Lake Dr, Tupelo	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
• John Carruth	511 MAGAZINE	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
• Dave Carruth	511 MAGAZINE	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
• Greg Pirkle	4216 Edenmont Dr Belden, MS 38824	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other
• Jimmy Repull	1413 Joyner St. Tupelo, MS 38804	<input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper <input type="checkbox"/> Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Television <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer <input type="checkbox"/> Other

# Staff Sign In

Tupelo Railroad (Tupelo, MS)  
Thursday, August 11, 2011  
(PLEASE PRINT)



NAME	ORGANIZATION	PHONE / E-MAIL
• <u>Kenny Fote</u>	<u>MDOT</u>	<u>601-946-7520</u>
• <u>Ralph Farnow</u>	<u>KMDOT</u>	<u>601 359 9874</u>
• <u>Kim Thurman</u>	<u>MDOT</u>	<u>601, 359. 7920</u>
• <u>Allen Pezzer</u>	<u>KCS RAILWAY</u>	<u>662. 617. 0727</u>
• <u>Sedrick Duce</u>	<u>MDOT</u>	<u>601- 359- 7920</u>
• <u>Eric Jefferson</u>	<u>ABMB</u>	<u>601 354-0696</u>
• <u>Cecil Vick</u>	<u>ABMB</u>	<u>601 354-0696</u>
• _____	_____	_____
• _____	_____	_____

## APPENDIX C

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### HANDOUT AND PRESENTATION MATERIALS





# **Tupelo Mississippi**

## **Planning & Environmental Study**

# **Railroad Relocation**

August 11, 2011

BancorpSouth Arena

375 East Main Street, Tupelo, MS 38804

4:00 PM to 7:00 PM

## **Tupelo Railroad Relocation, Planning, & Environmental Study Public Hearing**

Tonight's Public Hearing is being held to inform the general public of the preliminary study results for alternatives to relieve automotive / train traffic conflicts that has been selected for presentation in Tupelo, Mississippi. The Build Alternative raises the existing rail alignment to an elevation suitable for road traffic underneath while providing an efficient passageway for the rail line through Tupelo.

# **THINK UP!**

Presented By:



## Points of Interest:

- Two Railroad Lines the BNSF and the KCS
- 20 to 25 Trains per Day for BNSF and 3 per Day for the KCS
- Up to 40 Trains per Day in 2030
- 955.5 Vehicle-Hours Total Daily Aggregate Delay for 2005



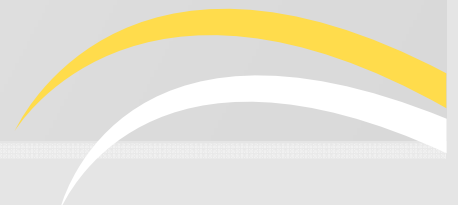
## Introduction:

Tupelo is a community with a population of approximately 35,000 located in the northeast region of Mississippi and is the region's major employment center. Two rail lines pass through Tupelo, the BNSF main line and the Kansas City Southern Railway (KCS) branch line. The BNSF main line currently operates approximately 20 to 25 trains per day through the city and the KCS rail line operates approximately 2 to 3 trains per day. The two railroads exchange rail cars near downtown Tupelo.

## Background and History:

In recent years, the City of Tupelo has become concerned that highway-rail traffic conflicts are having an adverse impact on the community. These impacts included congestion, safety, efficiency of railroad operations, and quality of life issues, such as railroad and horn noise, vibration, and air pollution.

In 2000, MDOT conducted a reconnaissance study which concluded that various improvement options, including re-routing the rail traffic around the City, were feasible and that further study was warranted. MDOT and the City agreed that from both feasibility and economic perspectives, further studies were justified and necessary. In 2004, Congress provided funding necessary to advance the project, and shortly thereafter, the Tupelo Railroad Relocation Planning and Environmental Study commenced. The detailed Feasibility Analysis was completed in 2006. The Environmental Impact Statement began in 2006 and the preliminary results are presented in tonight's public hearing.





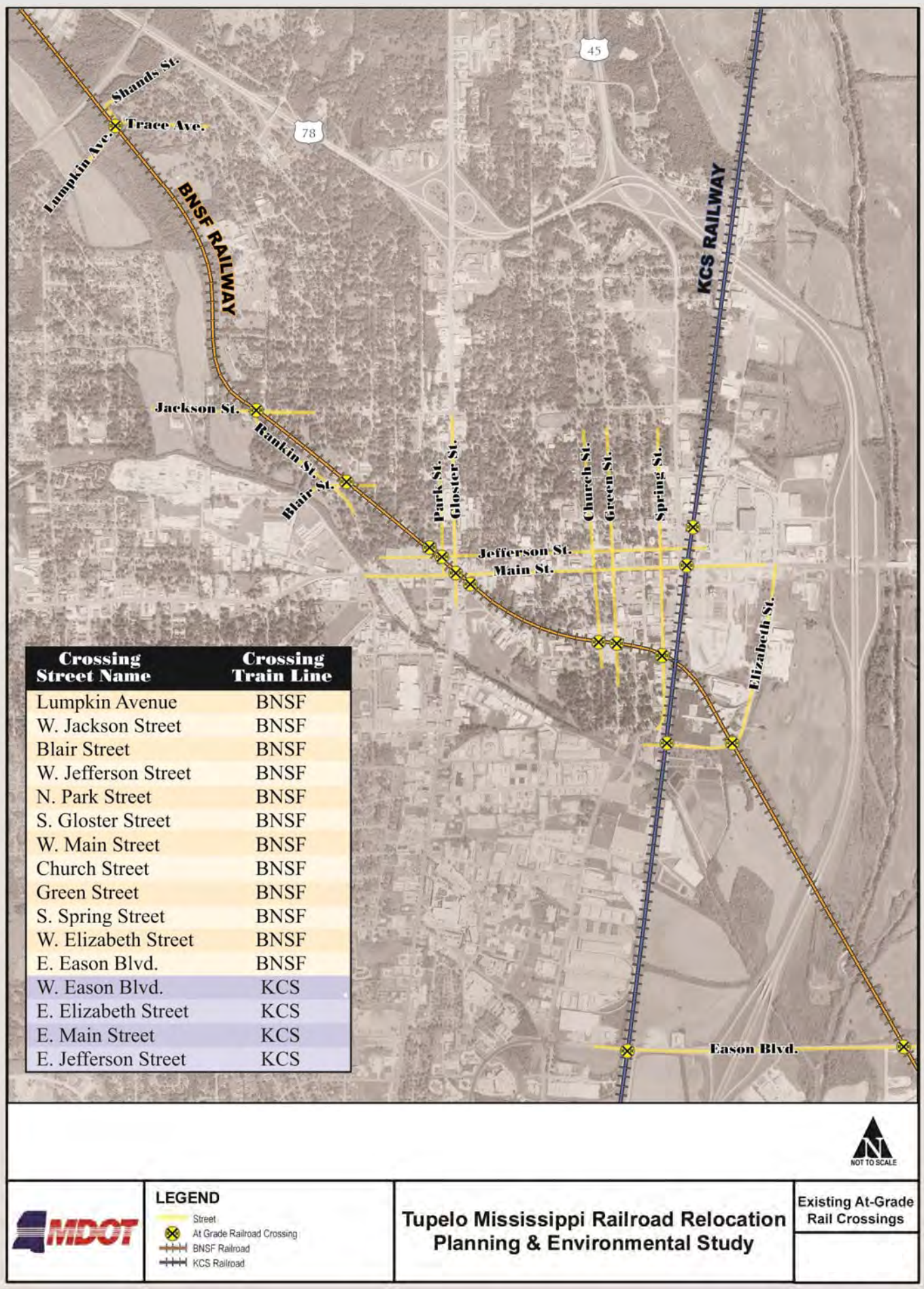


Figure 1.

Think Up!

## Why This Project?

- 39,000 AADT Traffic Count at the Crosstown Intersection.
- 16 Highway/ Railroad At-grade Crossings in Downtown
- Reduced Congestion and Delays
- Improved Safety for the Traveling Public
- Improved Response for Emergency Vehicles
- Enhanced Quality of Life



## Purpose:

The purpose of the Tupelo Railroad Relocation Planning and Environmental Study is to improve mobility and safety by reducing congestion caused by the movement of trains running through the City of Tupelo.

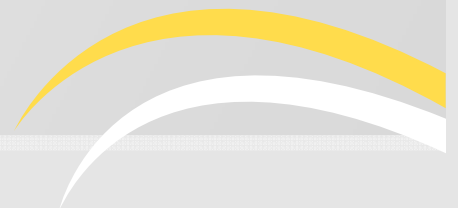
The BNSF and KCS rail lines share an interchange to exchange rail cars just south of downtown Tupelo. There are 16 at-grade highway/rail crossings within vicinity of downtown Tupelo, shown on the previous page in **Figure 1**. Twelve of those are owned by BNSF and four by KCS. The BNSF main line crosses diagonally at-grade at the Crosstown intersection. The Main Street/Gloster Street intersection has an annual average daily traffic (AADT) count of 39,000 vehicles per day, making it one of the busiest intersections in the City.

The projected train traffic for 2030 indicates approximately 40 trains per day on the BNSF main line. This would result in all 12 BNSF crossings having unacceptable levels of service in 2030, with traffic backups affecting 3 more intersections.

## Need:

The proposed project will address the following identified needs:

- To **reduce vehicular traffic delays** in downtown Tupelo
- To **improve response for emergency vehicles**
- To **improve the safety of the traveling public**
- To **improve efficiency of railroad operations** in the Tupelo area
- To **enhance quality of life** with regard to traffic flow, noise, and economic development





# Alternative Alignments Overview

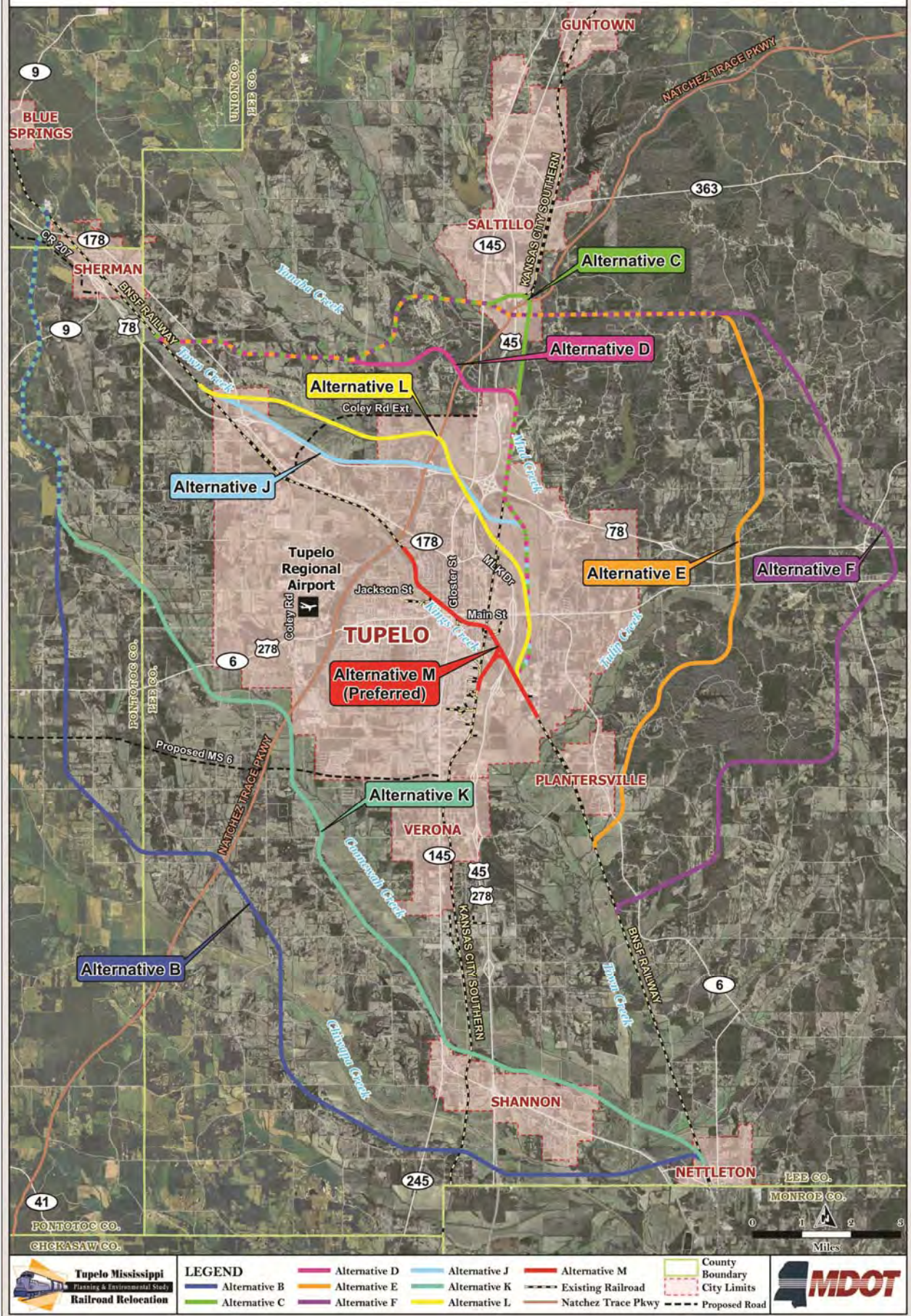


Figure 2.

Think Up!



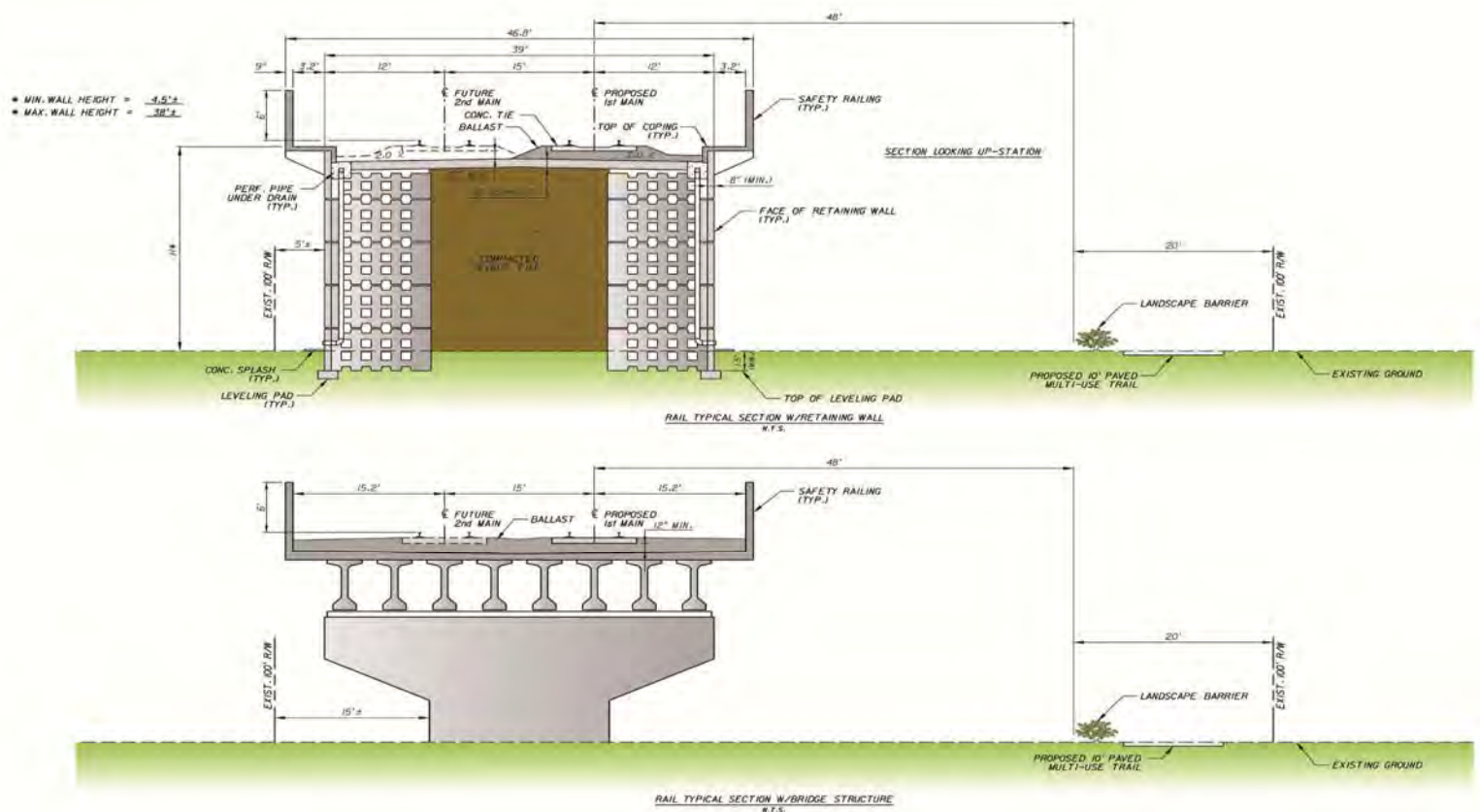
## How We Got Here!

- 16 Alternatives Studied
- Railroad Line Speeds up to 40 mph
- Reduced Noise Impacts
- Cumulative Cost Savings of over \$1.2 Billion Dollars

## Build Alternative:

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) studied 16 alternatives in and around the Tupelo area, as shown in **Figure 2**. on the previous page. The study encompassed the No Build, roadways bridging the railroad, the railroad bridging the roadways, various railroad alignments being relocated around the major metropolitan area, and the railroad being put in a trench. The Alternatives were evaluated based on the purpose and need for the project through an iterative process. The study concluded that only one Build Alternative was feasible.

The Build Alternative raises the existing rail line in place while staying within existing right-of-way. The rail line would be raised to a sufficient height on a combination of bridges and fill sections, see **Figure 3**. below, as to allow road traffic to travel freely underneath each existing crossing while providing a safe efficient passageway for the rail line. This combination of structure and fill allows for reduced noise from train horns, less traffic congestion, and increases efficiency and safety of railroad operations in Tupelo.



Think Up!

Figure 3.



# Build Alternative

PRELIMINARY AUGUST 2011



Figure 4.

Think Up!



**Table ES-1 Summary of Impacts**

Impact Category	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative
<b>Human Environment</b>		
Farmland Impacts (acres)	n/a	0.0
Residential Relocations (No.)	0	0
Business Relocations (No.)	0	1
Severe Noise Impacted Receptors (No.)	128	76
Vibration Impacted Receptors (No.)	28	46
Adverse Visual Impacts to Historic Sites or Districts (No.)	n/a	37
Hazardous Material Site Impacts (No.)	n/a	0
Environmental Justice Impacted Census Blocks (No.)	n/a	0
<b>Natural Environment</b>		
Perennial Stream Crossings (No.)	3	4
303 (d) Stream Crossings (No.)	2	3
Wetland Impacts (acres)	n/a	0.0
100-Year Floodplain Impacts (acres)	n/a	10.0
Natural Habitats (acres)	n/a	0.0
<b>Engineering</b>		
Electric Transmission Line Impacts (No.)*	n/a	3
Gas Pipeline Impacts (No.)*	n/a	0
Sanitary Sewer Impacts (No.)*	n/a	2
Railroad Bridges (Feet)	n/a	8,690
Roadway Bridges (Feet)	n/a	2,984
<b>Safety and Mobility</b>		
At-Grade Crossings within City of Tupelo (No.)	16	4
At-Grade Crossings with Unacceptable LOS in 2030 (No.)	3	0
Nearby Intersections with Unacceptable LOS in 2030 (No.)	3	1
At-Grade Crossings Blocked During Interchange Operation (No.)	8	0
<b>Construction Costs (\$2008)</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>\$384,745,000</b>

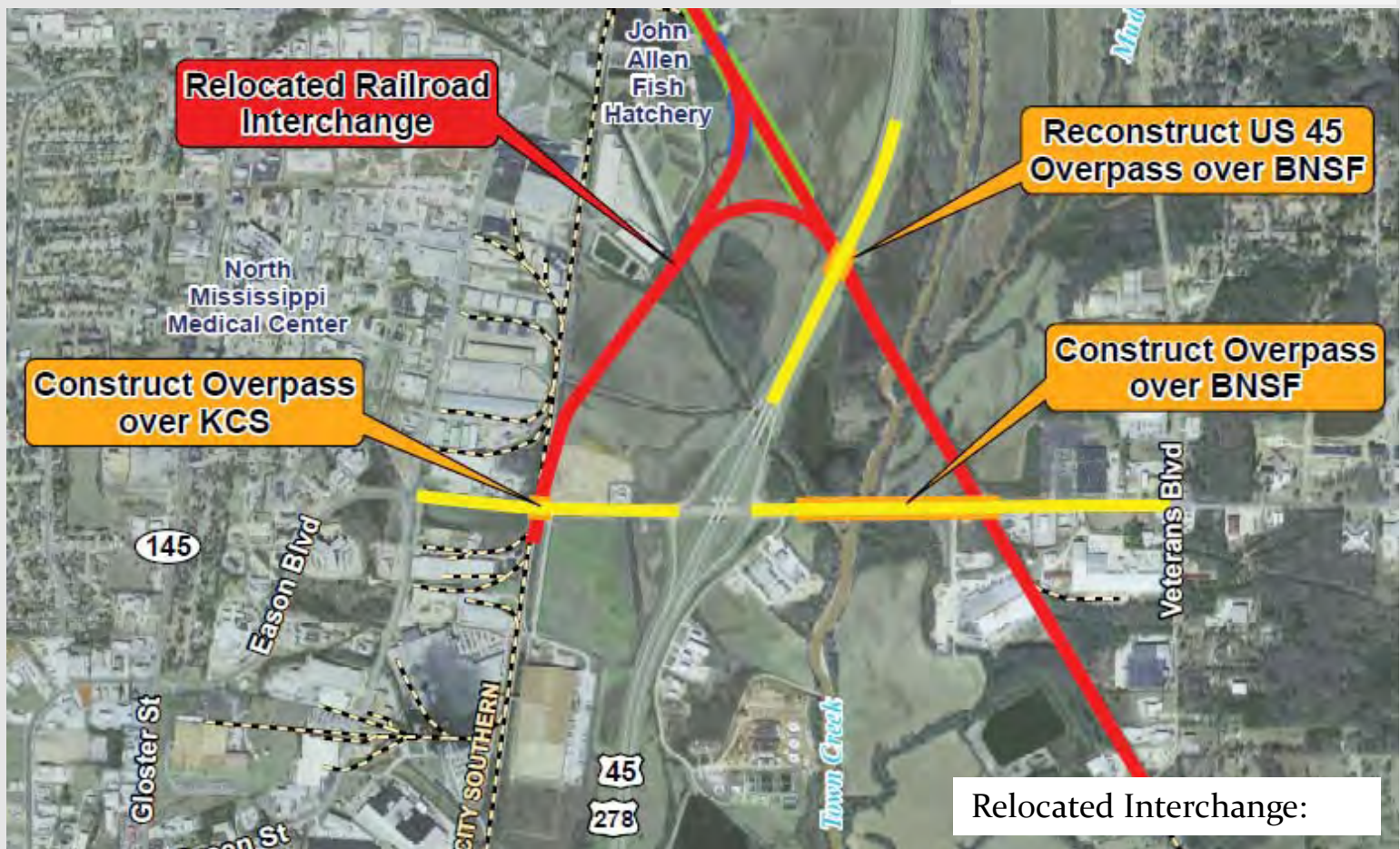
\*Based Upon Field Observations of Above Ground Utilities and/or Markers

## Phased Construction:

Traffic delays are induced downtown due to major north-south and east-west roadways being blocked during the necessary exchange of rail cars between BNSF and KCS.

The proposed interchange relocation, **Figure 5**, shown below, reduces auto traffic delays by moving the BNSF-KCS interaction away from downtown and placing the exchange to the southeast along the BNSF main line.

The relocated interchange could be the first phase of a phased construction strategy with subsequent phases evaluated at a later date.



Relocated Interchange:

**Figure 5.**



A large BNSF locomotive, number 5607, is shown in profile, moving from left to right. The locomotive is orange and blue with "BNSF" and the number "5607" clearly visible. The background is a solid orange color.

 **Tupelo Mississippi**  
Planning & Environmental Study  
**Railroad Relocation**

**Public Hearing**


August 11, 2011

Presented by:

A large BNSF locomotive, number 5607, is shown in profile, moving from left to right. The locomotive is orange and blue with "BNSF" and the number "5607" clearly visible. The background is a solid orange color.

**Agenda**

4:00 – 5:30 PM	Open House
5:30 PM	Public Hearing Presentation -Alternatives Evaluation Process -Build Alternative -Summary of Impacts
7:00 PM	Closing



2

## Public Hearing Purpose and Need

- Share information with the public about proposed improvements, including the conceptual design, potential benefits, and adverse social, economic, and environmental impacts
- Provide an official forum for the public to express their opinions and concerns
- Maintain an official record of all proceedings, comments, and materials submitted



3

## Public Comments

- Submit Comments to the Court Reporter Tonight
- Turn in Comment Forms Tonight
- Submit Written Comments, Exhibits, and/or Statements
  - Postmarked, FAX, or E-mail by September 12, 2011
  - Mail to: Mississippi Department of Transportation  
Environmental Division (87-01)  
P.O. Box 1850  
Jackson, MS 39215-9947
  - FAX: 601-359-7355
  - E-mail to: [environmental\\_comments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmental_comments@mdot.state.ms.us)
  - Project Website: [www.gomdot.com](http://www.gomdot.com)



4



## Study Information

This Public Hearing is being held for:  
Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT)  
Project Number 104289-101000

In coordination with U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)

Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)



5

## Public Hearing Compliance

- Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes
- Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended
- Public Participation is Encouraged and Solicited without Regard to Race, Color, Creed, Religion, Sex, Age, National Origin, Disability, or Family Status
- Federal Codes
  - U.S.C. Title 23 Section 128
  - 23 CFR 771 – Environmental Impact
  - 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508 – Protection of Environment
- Executive Orders
  - 11593 – Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment
  - 11988 – Floodplain Management
  - 11990 – Protection of Wetlands
  - 12898 – Environmental Justice
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969



6

## Agency Coordination

- Federal Agencies
  - FRA (Lead Agency)
  - Federal Highway Administration
  - EPA
  - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
  - National Park Service
  - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Other Entities
  - City of Tupelo
  - State and Local Agencies
  - Native American Tribes
  - Railroads (BNSF, KCS)



US Army Corps  
of Engineers



7

## Public Involvement Program

- Public Scoping Meeting (2006)
- Public Alternatives Meeting (2007)
- Project briefings to local communities and special interest groups
- Coordination meetings with local, state, and federal agencies
- [www.gomdot.com](http://www.gomdot.com)



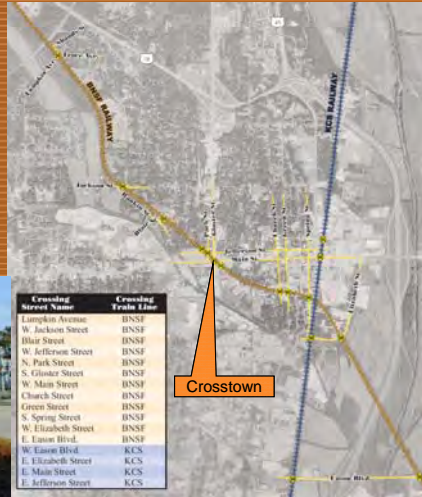
8



## Project Background

- ▶ BNSF and KCS Railroads Interchange in Downtown Tupelo
- ▶ Railroads Cross 16 Streets in Central Tupelo

(Main St. & Gloster St.)



9

## Project Background

- ▶ Delays Impact Tupelo
  - ▶ Vehicular and Emergency Service Delays
  - ▶ Extended Delay During Interchange Operations
- ▶ Federal Grant
- ▶ MDOT Support
- ▶ Railroads' Support



10

## Project Purpose and Need

- ▶ Reduce Vehicular Traffic Delays
- ▶ Improve Response for Emergency Vehicles
- ▶ Improve Safety of Traveling Public
- ▶ Improve Efficiency of Rail Operations
- ▶ Enhance Quality of Life
- ▶ Additional Benefits
  - ▶ Economic Development
  - ▶ Access to Tupelo CBD
  - ▶ Multimodal Relationships



11

## Railroad Operations

- ▶ Existing Train Volumes (2005)
  - ▶ BNSF – 20 to 25 Trains Per Day
  - ▶ KCS – 2 to 3 Trains Per Day
- ▶ Future Train Volumes (2030)
  - ▶ BNSF – 39 to 41 Trains Per Day
  - ▶ KCS – 3 to 5 Trains Per Day



12



## At-Grade Traffic Delay Analysis

- ▶ At-Grade Vehicle Delay (2005 & 2030)
- ▶ 16 At-Grade Crossings
- ▶ Secondary Impacts on 13 Near-by Intersections
- ▶ All At-Grade Crossings & 4 Near-by Intersections Fail in the Design Year (2030)



13

## Cost of Congestion

- ▶ Annual Cost of Congestion – 2005 and 2030

Year	At-Grade Crossing	Near-by Intersections as Secondary Impact	Total Cost of Congestion
2005	\$7,817,200	\$10,466,100	\$18,283,300
2030	\$24,556,700	\$57,388,600	\$81,945,300

- ▶ Cumulative Cost of Congestion – 2005 to 2030

From 2005 to 2030	At-Grade Crossing	Near-by Intersections as Secondary Impact	Total Cost of Congestion
	\$402,621,900	\$848,183,750	\$1,250,805,650




14



# Alternatives Considered

- ▶ Operational Improvements
  - ▶ Relocated Railroad Interchange
  - ▶ Safety Improvements
- ▶ In-Town Grade Separations
  - ▶ Roadways Over BNSF
  - ▶ BNSF Over Roadways
- ▶ New Rail Bypass Alignments



15

[illegible]



## Operational Improvements

- ▶ Disadvantages
  - ▶ Does Not Address Crosstown or Other In-town Crossings for Through Trains
  - ▶ Does Not Satisfy Project Purpose and Need



17

## In-Town Grade Separations

- ▶ 2 Alternatives Elevating Roadways over BNSF
  - ▶ Crosstown over BNSF
  - ▶ Gloster Street over BNSF & Build New East-West Overpass Connection to Carnation Street



18

## In-Town Grade Separations

### ▶ 3 Alternatives Elevating BNSF over Roadways

- ▶ Central Overpass
- ▶ All Bridge Overpass Viaduct
- ▶ Combination Bridge/Retaining Wall Overpass Viaduct

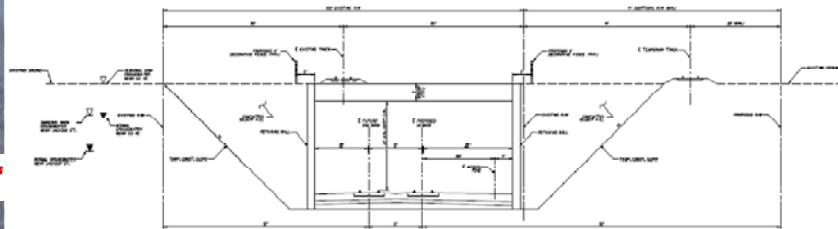


19

## In-Town Grade Separations

### ▶ Railroad Trench

- ▶ 30-35 feet of excavation
- ▶ 5 Perennial Stream Crossings
- ▶ Mostly Below Water Table



20



## In-Town Grade Separations

### ► Disadvantages

- Business Impacts on Main & Gloster
- Some Alternatives Require Permanent Closure of Streets
- Some Alternatives Do Not Address Noise Issue
- Some Alternatives Do Not Address other High-Volume Crossings
- Trench Not Feasible

### ► Longer Elevated Viaduct Feasible



21

## New Rail Bypass Alignments

### ► 8 Bypass Corridors

- 2 Western
- 2 to Share KCS
- 2 Eastern
- 1 to Parallel US 78
- 1 to Parallel Town Creek



22



# New Rail Bypass Alignments

- ▶ Disadvantages
  - ▶ National Park Service Disapproved of New Crossings of Natchez Trace Parkway
  - ▶ Railroads Disapproved of Shared Corridor
  - ▶ Saltillo Disapproved of New Track in City
  - ▶ Cultural Impacts to Native American Sites
  - ▶ Floodplain and Wetlands Impacts
  - ▶ Large Right-of-Way Acquisition
  - ▶ Increase in Railroad Operations Costs
  - ▶ No Public Support for Any Bypass Alternative at Public Meetings



23

[illegible]



## No-Build Alternative (Alternative A)

- ▶ No New Improvements



25

## No-Build Alternative Impacts

- ▶ Increase in Traffic Delay at All At-Grade Crossings & 4 Near-by Intersections
- ▶ Increased Emergency Service Response Times
- ▶ Noise from Train Horns
  - ▶ 414 Noise Impacted Residences
    - ▶ 128 Severely Impacted
- ▶ Decreased Air Quality



26

## Elevated Rail Viaduct (Build Alternative)

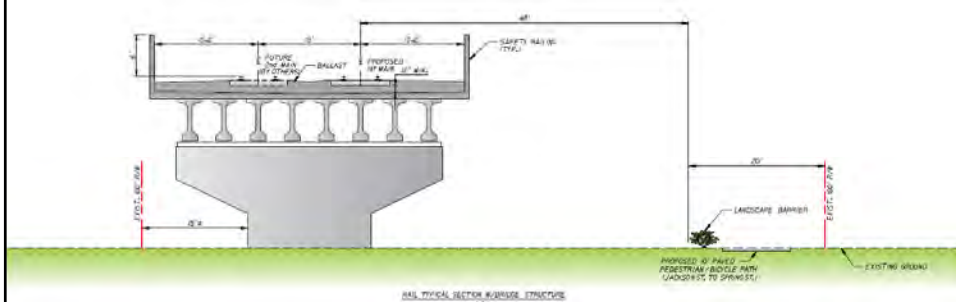
- ▶ Elevates Rail Through Town
  - ▶ Combination Bridge & Fill Structure
  - ▶ Lumpkin Ave. to US 45
- ▶ Includes Relocated Railroad Interchange
  - ▶ New Grade Separations at Eason Blvd. (BNSF & KCS)
- ▶ Pedestrian/Bicycle Path in R/W



27

## Elevated Rail Viaduct (Build Alternative)

- ▶ Elevated Structure



28



## Elevated Rail Viaduct (Build Alternative)

### ► Potential Benefits

- 12 Grade Crossings Eliminated with No Road Closures
- Creates “Quiet Zone” – No Train Horns on BNSF
- Improves rail speed (25 MPH to 40 MPH)
- Eliminates BNSF/KCS mainline crossing
- No net increase in rail miles
- Support from Public, BNSF, KCS, and NPS

### ► Potential Impacts

- Minimal R/W Required
  - Only for Interchange
  - One Relocation
- Visual Impacts Due to Structure



29



## Elevated Rail Viaduct (Build Alternative)

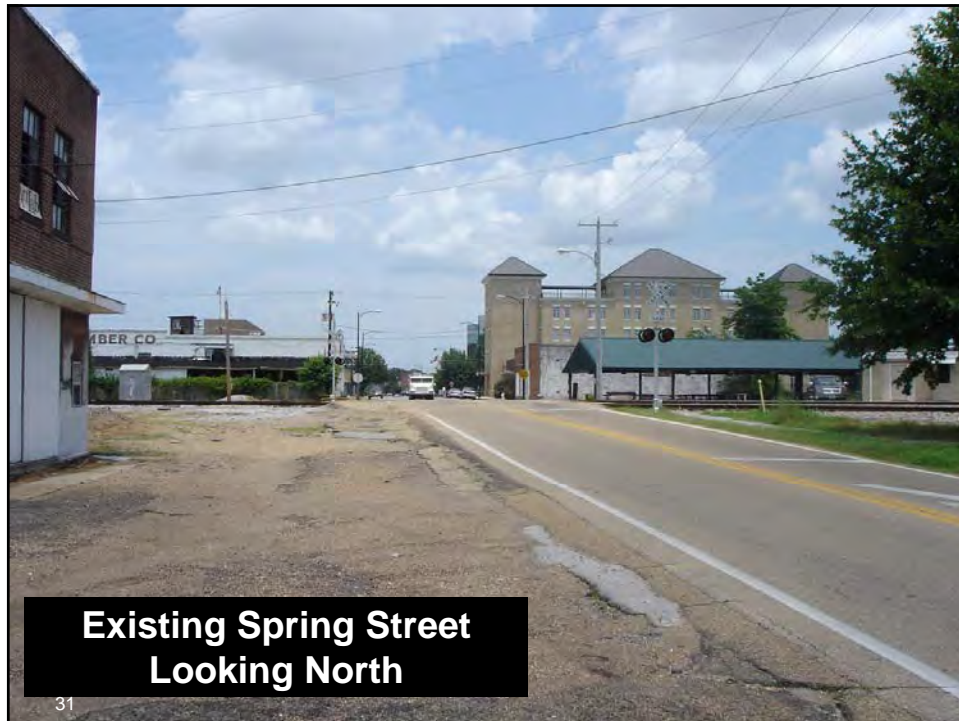
### 12 At-Grade Crossings Removed

- 11 BNSF
  - Jackson St.
  - Blair St.
  - Jefferson St.
  - Park St.
  - Gloster St. (MS 145)
  - Main St. (US 278/MS 6)
  - Church St.
  - Spring St.
  - Green St.
  - Elizabeth St.
  - Eason Blvd. (Roadway over Rail)
- 1 KCS
  - Eason Blvd. (Roadway over Rail)



30

















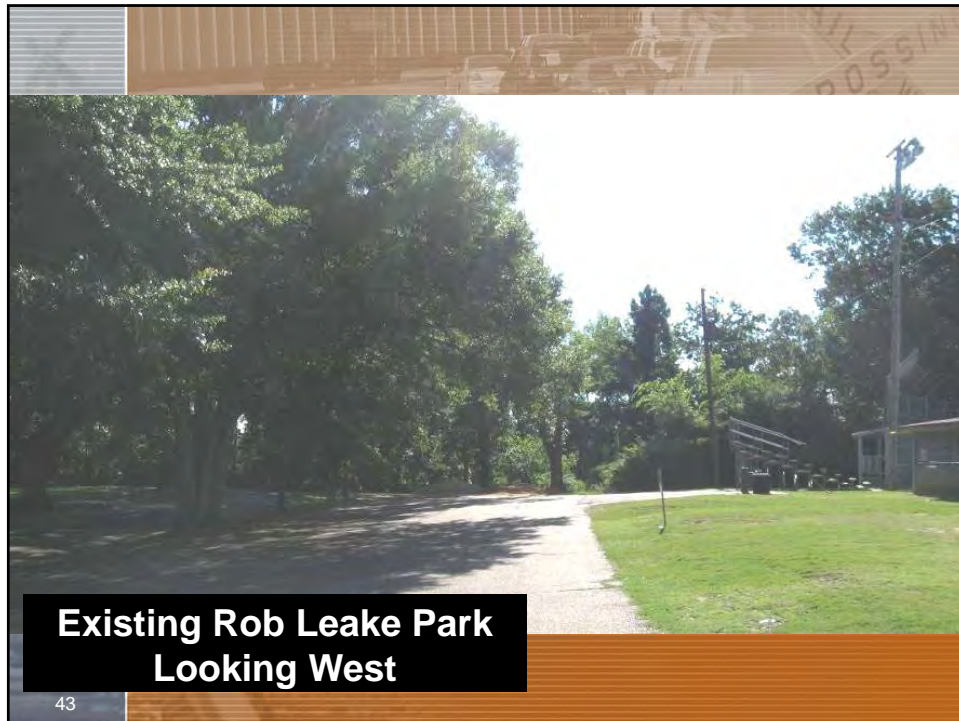
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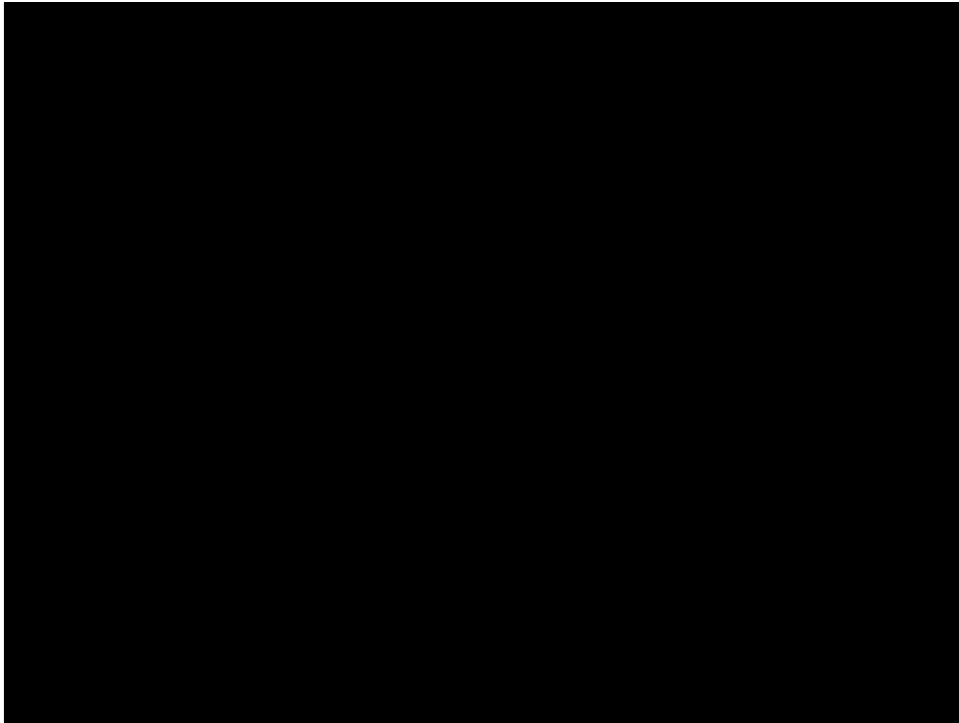
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## Impacts of Build Alternative

### ► Social Environment Impacts

- Neighborhoods
  - Increased Access
  - Reduced Auto Traffic Delay
  - Increased Safety
- Community Cohesion – No Impacts
- Public Lands – No Impacts
- Historic Resources
  - Visual Impacts to Viewshed
  - Mitigation Efforts Through Memorandum of Agreement
    - Design to Include Aesthetic Treatments
    - Survey of Historic Properties
    - Pedestrian/Bike Path



47

## Impacts of Build Alternative

### ► Natural Environment Impacts

- Water Quality – No Impacts
  - May Improve Water Quality
- Floodplains
  - 10 Acres of 100-Year Floodplain
  - 3 Crossings of Designated Floodways
    - All by Bridge Structures
- Wetlands
  - Construction Impacts
- Threatened & Endangered Species – No Impacts



48

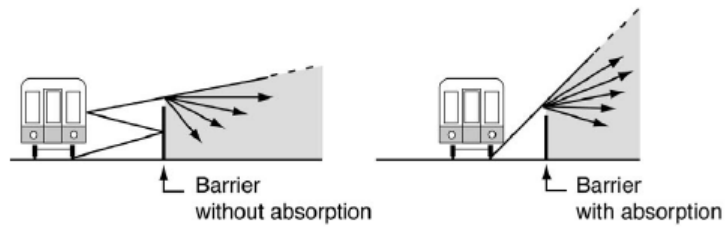


## Impacts of Build Alternative

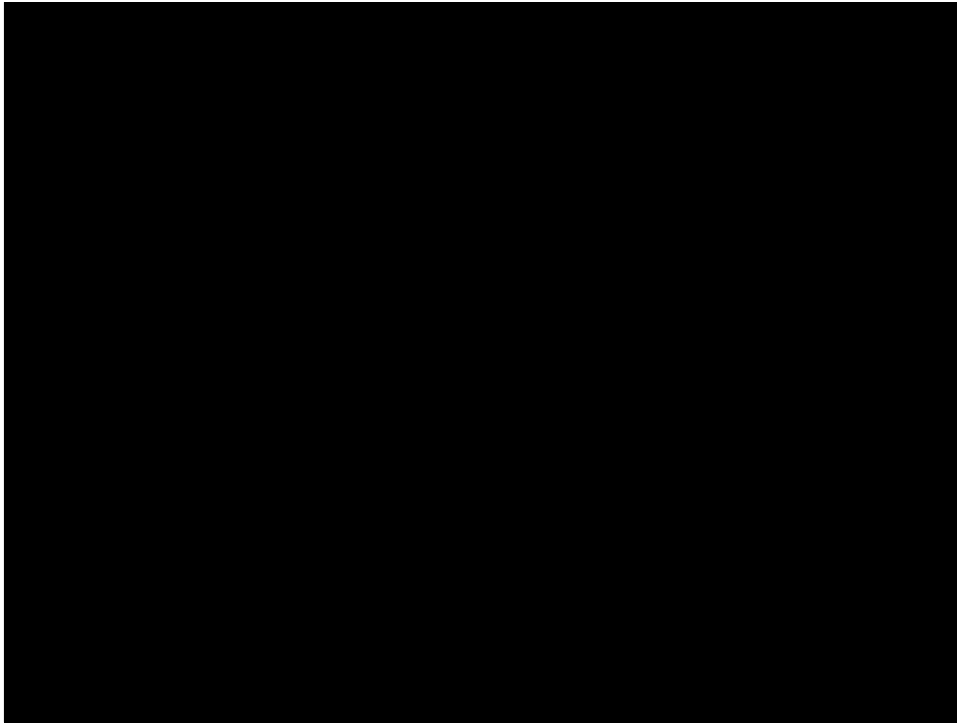
### ► Physical Environment

#### ► Noise

- No Horn Soundings on BNSF through Central Tupelo
- 52 Sites Reduced Noise Severity
  - 23 Severe Impact → Moderate Impact
  - 29 Moderate Impact → No Impact
- Structure Includes 6-foot Safety Railing Not Included in Noise Model



49



## Impacts of Build Alternative

- ▶ **Physical Environment**
  - ▶ **Vibration**
    - ▶ Increase in Vibration Due to Faster Trains
      - ▶ Increase from 28 to 46 Impacted Sites
      - ▶ Vibration Impacts Would Fall Well Below Damage Threshold
      - ▶ Mitigation Measures Would Dramatically Increase Cost With Little Benefit
  - ▶ **Air Quality – No Impact**
    - ▶ Improvement of Air Quality Due to Reduction of Idling Vehicles
  - ▶ **Contamination – No Impact**
  - ▶ **Energy**
    - ▶ Reduced Energy Consumption



52

## Impacts of Build Alternative

- ▶ Phase I – Relocate Railroad Interchange
  - ▶ Includes Eason Blvd. Overpasses
  - ▶ \$76 Million
- ▶ Phases II & III – Build Elevated Railroad Viaduct
  - ▶ Phase II – Temporary Track Construction
    - ▶ Needed to Construct Elevated Viaduct
    - ▶ \$12 Million
  - ▶ Phase III – Viaduct Construction
    - ▶ Includes US 45 Overpass Reconstruction
    - ▶ Includes Pedestrian/Bike Path
    - ▶ \$297 Million
- ▶ Total Construction Cost - \$385 Million
  - ▶ Annual Maintenance Cost - \$350,000
  - ▶ No Funds Identified for Design, Right-of-Way, or Construction



53

## Public Comments

- Submit Comments to the Court Reporter Tonight
- Turn in Comment Forms Tonight
- Submit Written Comments, Exhibits, and/or Statements
  - Postmarked, FAX, or E-mail by September 12, 2011
  - Mail to: Mississippi Department of Transportation  
Environmental Division (87-01)  
P.O. Box 1850  
Jackson, MS 39215-9947
  - FAX: 601-359-7355
  - E-mail to: [environmental\\_comments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmental_comments@mdot.state.ms.us)
  - Project Website: [www.gomdot.com](http://www.gomdot.com)



54





**Tupelo Mississippi**  
Planning & Environmental Study  
**Railroad Relocation**

**Public Hearing**

August 11, 2011

Presented by:



The poster features a large photograph of a BNSF locomotive, number 5607, in orange and blue livery, moving from left to right. The locomotive is pulling a dark-colored freight car. The background is a solid brown color. In the upper left corner, there is a small graphic of a train engine emerging from a yellow starburst shape. To the right of this graphic, the text 'Tupelo Mississippi' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Below this, 'Planning & Environmental Study' is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. Further down, 'Railroad Relocation' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font. On the right side of the poster, the words 'Public Hearing' are written in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. Below this, the date 'August 11, 2011' is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. In the bottom right corner, the text 'Presented by:' is written in a small, black, sans-serif font. To the right of this text is the logo for the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), which consists of a blue square with a white stylized 'M' and the letters 'MDOT' in red.

## APPENDIX D

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### SUMMARY OF CITY OFFICIALS BRIEFING

# Public Involvement Record Sheet

## Tupelo Railroad Relocation EIS



### MEETING WITH CITY OFFICIALS

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	August 11, 2011
<b>Time of Meeting</b>	1:30 pm
<b>Location of Meeting</b>	BancorpSouth Arena, Tupelo, MS
<b>Meeting Style</b>	Conference style meeting
<b>Purpose of Meeting</b>	To brief the Mayor and interested City officials on the status of the project prior to the public hearing
<b>Duration of Meeting</b>	About 2 hours (2 sessions, approx. 1 hour each)

City Attendees – Meeting 1:  
Mayor Jack Reed  
Councilman Mike Bryan  
Councilman Markel Whittington

City Attendees – Meeting 2:  
Mayor Jack Reed  
Councilwoman Nettie Davis  
Councilman Willie Jennings

#### Summary:

Rhea Vincent opened the first briefing with a round of self-introductions by attending staff from FRA, MDOT, HDR, ABMB, Brockington & Associates, and Cook Coggin Engineers. Carnot Evans explained that the purpose of the public hearing is to share information with the public and to provide a forum for them to express their opinions and provide comments about the project. The public hearing will be a combination of an open house style format from 4 – 5:30 p.m. At 5:30, a formal presentation will be given immediately after which the public will be invited to ask questions. Following the formal presentation and Q&A period, the hearing will return to an open-house informal style format until 7 p.m. Mr. Evans then presented the PowerPoint presentation that would be shown to the public at 5:30 p.m.

During the PowerPoint, the Mayor asked what the term “design year” means. Mr. Evans explained that future traffic is modeled from projections based on historic growth patterns to a future year, typically 20 - 25 years from the year the analysis was conducted. In this case, the

*The purpose of this document is to serve as a record of meetings and Public Involvement held for the Tupelo Railroad Relocation EIS.*



base year is 2005 and the design year is 2025. Mr. Vincent and Mr. Evans also explained the concept of delay and cost of congestion. Future rail traffic projections were figured differently from vehicular traffic, however, since rail operations are driven by national economic conditions. Mr. Evans described the alternatives that were considered and studied, and how from the 16 alternatives considered, Alternative M became the preferred alternative through the NEPA process.

Mr. Evans described the features, benefits, and impacts of Alternative M, and presented a video “rendering” of how the elevated rail would look at various locations along the alignment in Tupelo. With an estimated total construction cost of \$385 million, no funds have been allocated at this time to design or construct the facility. The City would be required to maintain the structure, while the railroad would maintain the track and surface.

A few of the questions asked by the City officials:

1.) How long will this project take to build?

*Response:* Design would take about 1-1/2 to 2 years, and right-of-way acquisition would take about 1-1/2 to 2 years. Construction of the project will take up to 2 years. Construction would be phased.

2.) What would the annual maintenance require?

*Response:* Repainting the structure as needed, maintain the footpath below the structure,

3.) How can this project be funded?

*Response:* Congress is the most likely source for the majority of the funding. The City may be required to put up a match, typically 20%.

4.) Would MDOT take the lead role in this project?

*Response:* Only if requested by the City and permitted to by the Commission.

5.) Could passenger service such as Amtrak be introduced as a potential funding source for the City?

*Response:* Not likely. It would have to come from State, local, or private sources.

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Notes taken by: Eric Jefferson, PE, ABMB Engineers, Inc.

*The purpose of this document is to serve as a record of meetings and Public Involvement held for the Tupelo Railroad Relocation EIS.*

## APPENDIX E

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### SUMMARY AND TRANSCRIPT OF HEARING

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
PUBLIC HEARING

IN RE: TUPELO RAILROAD RELOCATION PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
STUDY, TUPELO, MISSISSIPPI

THE FOLLOWING VERBAL COMMENTS WERE TAKEN DURING THE  
PUBLIC HEARING HELD BY MDOT IN THE BANCORPSOUTH CENTER,  
TUPELO, MS, ON AUGUST 11, 2010, COMMENCING AT 4:00 P.M.

Reported by: KATHRYN H. BOYER, CSR #1349

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ADVANCED COURT REPORTING  
P.O. BOX 761  
TUPELO, MS 38802-0761

ORIGINAL



1 MR. JACQUE PRATHER: (This is a verbatim copy  
2 of the typed sheet of concerns Mr. Prather gave the court  
3 reporter). Titled: Problems and Concerns with Elevating  
4 Railroad through Tupelo that need answers, August 11, 2011.

- 5 1. Eye sore
- 6 2. Having seen elevated tracks before, I noticed:
  - 7 A. Accumulation of trash and debris
  - 8 underneath
  - 9 B. Danger of children climbing on structure
  - 10 C. Lack of upkeep of structure
  - 11 D. Noise of passing trains increased due to
  - 12 elevation
  - 13 E. Falling items and fluids from train cars
- 14 3. Will City of Tupelo be responsible for any
- 15 upkeep of structure?
- 16 4. Will City of Tupelo have any expense with
- 17 approaches at intersections?
  - 18 A. Relocation of traffic lights
  - 19 B. Realignment of streets
  - 20 C. Landscaping
  - 21 D. Will work be required outside railroad
  - 22 right-of-way?
  - 23 E. Who will pay damage to property owners, if
  - 24 any?
- 25 5. Will City of Tupelo have any responsibility

1 for any upkeep after completion?

2 6. What would happen if railroad stopped using  
3 this line?

4 A. Would City of Tupelo have to remove  
5 structure?

6 B. What effect would it have if railroad went  
7 bankrupt?

8 7. Trains do derail. What would happen?

9 A. Could cars be lifted back on the track if  
10 they fell off?

11 B. How would this effect Crosstown if it  
12 happened there?

13 C. What if a tank car burst and spilled its  
14 contents? Could anyone in our area handle the clean-up?

15 There are many other problems that might have to  
16 be dealt with. Those noted are enough to not elevate the  
17 railroad through Tupelo. Maybe our city council members  
18 should visit a few cities with elevated tracks before voting  
19 on this issue. They should:

20 A. Look at condition of structure

21 B. Walk at least 100 yards under track at  
22 five or more locations, not just at street crossings

23 C. Check noise of passing train

24 D. Ask city government about improvements and  
25 problems with elevated tracks in their cities

1                   During construction there would be some problems:

2                   A. Spring Street could be closed with traffic  
3                   diverted to Green Street

4                   B. Green Street could be closed with traffic  
5                   diverted to Church Street and Spring Street

6                   C. Church Street could be closed with traffic  
7                   diverted to Green Street

8                   D. Any two of the above streets could be  
9                   closed with traffic diverted to the remaining street

10                  E. Crosstown would be a great problem if Main  
11                  Street and Gloster Street were closed for construction. If  
12                  traffic was diverted to Park Street, this would be a problem.  
13                  If traffic was diverted to Robins Street and Jefferson Street  
14                  and back to Gloster Street, this would be a great problem for  
15                  Milam School.

16                  If this is done, it will be a part of Tupelo for a  
17                  very long time. My suggestion is to go around Tupelo or do  
18                  nothing. Signed, Jacque Prather, 662-842-8345.

19                  MR. DAVID CROOK: Basically, I don't want it  
20                  because it would have to interfere with my property and take  
21                  out all my trees and everything. My front door is, like, 25  
22                  feet from the railroad, so I definitely don't want it.

23                  MR. CARNOT EVANS: Good evening, ladies and  
24                  gentlemen. As representative of the Mississippi Department  
25                  of Transportation, we'd like to welcome you to the public



1 hearing for the Tupelo Railroad Relocation Planning and  
2 Environmental Study. This presentation will discuss the  
3 study's history, progress, alternatives considered and the  
4 environmental impacts of the no-build and build alternatives.

5 Before I begin, I know we had some people stand  
6 up, but I would like to recognize any elected officials who  
7 are with us tonight or any appointed officials or their  
8 representatives. Please stand and introduce yourselves for  
9 the public record.

10 MAYOR REED: Mayor Jack Reed, Jr., Mayor of  
11 Tupelo.

12 MR. MARKEL WHITTINGTON: Markel Whittington,  
13 councilman for Tupelo.

14 MR. WILLIE JENNINGS: Willie Jennings,  
15 councilman for Tupelo.

16 MR. CARNOT EVANS: Anyone else? And I'd also  
17 like to point out that the representative from FRA, John  
18 Winkle, is here in the audience as well. First I would like  
19 to discuss the agenda for this evening's hearing. This  
20 hearing is being held from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the  
21 BancorpSouth Center at 375 East Main Street in Tupelo,  
22 Mississippi, with an open house forum from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m.,  
23 a formal presentation including public testimony at 5:30 p.m.  
24 and concludes at 7:00 p.m. The public are encouraged to make  
25 comments. If you wish to speak tonight, please fill out a

1 speaker card and hand it to one of our study team members.  
2 Just look for someone with one of these name tags.

3 The purpose of tonight's public hearing is to  
4 share information about the proposed project and serve as the  
5 official forum to give interested parties the opportunity to  
6 express their views concerning the location, the conceptual  
7 design and social, economic and environmental impacts of the  
8 proposed improvements.

9 We are here tonight to provide project background  
10 information and receive comments on the preliminary study  
11 results. In a few moments, we will have a technical  
12 presentation which will provide an overview of the study  
13 process and the preliminary results of these evaluations.

14 If you wish to speak tonight at the conclusion of  
15 the technical presentation, please fill out a speaker card  
16 and turn it in to one of our designated study team members.  
17 If you need a speaker card, we have some team members  
18 available to hand them out to you.

19 We recognize that there are also some people who  
20 are not comfortable speaking in front of a large crowd. We  
21 will not require you to speak publically. Aside from  
22 speaking tonight, there are three methods by which the public  
23 can leave comment on this project to be entered into the  
24 public record. The first option is to dictate your comments  
25 directly to the court reporter located here next to me.

1 Comments can be made after this presentation or at anytime  
2 during this public hearing.

3 The second option is to provide written comments.  
4 As you signed in this evening, you should have received a  
5 comment form. Please feel free to fill it out and put it in  
6 the comment box located at the back of the room or you can  
7 mail the form to us later. The name and address to mail the  
8 form is located on the comment form.

9 The third option is to provide comments -- written  
10 comments via fax or e-mail. The fax number and e-mail  
11 address are shown here and are also on the project's website  
12 at [www.gomdot.com](http://www.gomdot.com). All comments that are mailed, faxed or  
13 e-mailed to MDOT should be either postmarked or received no  
14 later than 5:00 p.m., September 12th, 2011.

15 All comments, regardless of form, will be given  
16 equal weight and will become part of the public record for  
17 this project.

18 The technical staff are available throughout the  
19 hearing to answer any questions you may have. There are a  
20 number of study team members. Just look for someone with a  
21 name tag.

22 Now I would like to go ahead and cover the  
23 administrative items for this evening's hearing which are  
24 required by law.

25 This public hearing is being held relative to



1 Mississippi Department of Transportation, or MDOT, project  
2 number 104289-101000 and was done in coordination with the  
3 U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Railroad  
4 Administration or FRA. The Tupelo Railroad Relocation  
5 Planning and Environmental Study has prepared a Draft  
6 Environmental Impact Statement, or DEIS, to evaluate the  
7 impacts of the no-build and build alternative on the social,  
8 economic and cultural environments. The proposed  
9 improvements include providing railroad and roadway  
10 structures to reduce the conflict of railroad and automobile  
11 traffic at at-grade crossings on the BNSF main line in the  
12 central Tupelo, Mississippi, area.

13           This public hearing is being held to give all  
14 interested persons the right to understand the project and  
15 comment on their concerns to MDOT. Public participation at  
16 this hearing is encouraged and solicited without regard to  
17 race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, national origin,  
18 disability or family status. This public hearing is  
19 conducted in accordance with Title 6 of the Civil Rights Act  
20 of 1964 and related statutes and Title 8 of the Civil Rights  
21 Act of 1968, as amended. This public hearing is also being  
22 held in accordance with 23 United States Code 128, 40 Code of  
23 Federal Regulations 1500-1508, 23 Code of Federal Regulations  
24 771; Executive Order 11593, Protection and Enhancement of the  
25 Cultural Environment; Executive Order 11988, Floodplain

1 Management; Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands;  
2 and Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice.

3 This public hearing was advertised consistent with  
4 federal and state requirements and is being conducted  
5 consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.  
6 The Tupelo Railroad Relocation Planning and Environmental  
7 Study was authorized by Mississippi statutes to comply with  
8 the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, or  
9 NEPA, of 1969 and is required to secure federal government  
10 approval.

11 MDOT serves as the lead agency on this study. The  
12 proposed project is being coordinated with the appropriate  
13 federal, state and local agencies. Six federal agencies have  
14 been involved with the project and serve as commenting and  
15 cooperating agencies in support of MDOT. The federal  
16 agencies involved are the FRA, who serves as the lead federal  
17 agency, the Federal Highway Administration, the Environmental  
18 Protection Agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the  
19 National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.  
20 Other entities which have been consulted include the State  
21 Historic Preservation Office, the City of Tupelo, the Tupelo  
22 Community Development Foundation, the Tupelo Major  
23 Thoroughfare Committee, the Tupelo Historic Preservation  
24 Society and the Town Creek Master Water Management District.  
25 The Chickasaw, the Quapaw, the Choctaw and the Tunica Native

1 American Tribes have also been consulted with during the  
2 course of this study, as well as both railroad companies BNSF  
3 and Kansas City Southern, or KCS.

4 The proposed improvements are consistent with  
5 other transportation improvements planned for the study area  
6 and coordinated with on-going projects and various developers  
7 in the area.

8 This concludes the required administrative  
9 statements.

10 (A video presentation was made lasting  
11 approximately 30 minutes)

12 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Carnot, thank you. We  
13 appreciate your presentation here. Nice job. Ladies and  
14 gentlemen, at this point in time, we're going to start the  
15 speaker session here. We have seven people that signed cards  
16 wishing to either make a statement or ask a question to the  
17 MDOT and/or consultant personnel. I do not have them in --  
18 they are in random order. If you will, I'll ask you to raise  
19 your hand when I call out your name. I'll walk over to you  
20 and hand the mike to you. Each person will be allowed two  
21 minutes to either make a speech or ask a question. And at  
22 this time, we'll start the process. My first card here says  
23 -- I guess it's Ms. Joyce Logan.

24 MS. JOYCE LOGAN: Well, I think you've  
25 answered most of the questions that I had. The presentation



1 was very good. The most important thing is the money.

2 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Money.

3 MS. JOYCE LOGAN: Show us the money. Show me  
4 the money.

5 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Okay. I'm going to go  
6 ahead and try to answer your question the best I can. At  
7 this point in time, we know that the City of Tupelo does not  
8 have 385 million dollars. Point blank. We also know that  
9 MDOT at this point in time does not have 385 million dollars.  
10 With respect to the State of Mississippi, we haven't asked,  
11 but we suspect they don't have it either. Finally, we have  
12 talked with the federal regs about this and there is no  
13 scheduled money for this project at all, so there's no 385  
14 million dollars available. The only choice that we have at  
15 this time that I know of would be to go to Congress and  
16 request the funds.

17 MS. JOYCE LOGAN: Won't find it there right  
18 now.

19 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Okay. Our next speaker  
20 will be Ms. Carolyn Watson.

21 MS. CAROLYN WATSON: I don't like the way the  
22 white walls look on the sections that are not elevated and I  
23 just -- I don't like that at all and I wish that didn't have  
24 to be that way because I -- I don't like the fact of a wall  
25 blocking part of the city and the view of the city too

1 looking through the train. And I had question about -- it  
2 said you would have to build an alternative track while the  
3 elevated track was being built. Where will that be? Will it  
4 take up part of our property while that's being built? The  
5 tracks that are -- you know, the alternative. Like, the  
6 train is in my backyard. Will it take up too much of my  
7 backyard?

8 MR. RHEA VINCENT: See if I can answer your  
9 question. I can handle the second question pretty easily and  
10 the first question I'll see. The retaining wall structure  
11 out there, depending on what -- how much you want to spend  
12 will depend on how much of that retaining wall you want out  
13 there. The bottom line for that retaining wall at this point  
14 in time, the cost of it is \$2,500 a foot. The bridge  
15 structure itself, the concrete bridge structure, is \$8,500 a  
16 foot. That's why we are putting some of this out there.  
17 It's expensive. Where we have it marked on the plans here,  
18 we just are speculating that these might be good places to  
19 show them, but they do not have to be there. They can be  
20 mixed and matched depending on what you want to do with it.

21 Finally, there can be artistic impressions put  
22 against these walls provided the City of Tupelo wants to do  
23 that and the people of Tupelo would like it. Does that  
24 answer your question there?

25 Now your second question. Your second question

1 was: The railroad is to be shifted off to the side of where  
2 it currently is. That line will stay on rail right-of-way.  
3 As far as we can tell with this study -- and it's not perfect  
4 -- that rail line will not require us to buy anymore  
5 right-of-way, that alternative line, that temporary line on  
6 the site. However, in the event that that does happen, that  
7 we have to buy extra right-of-way, the Uniform Relocation Act  
8 will kick in, which means that we will basically go in,  
9 evaluate the property that we would be purchasing and try to  
10 give you a good, honest value for that piece of property that  
11 we purchase. Does that answer your question?

12 MS. JOYCE LOGAN: Well, would it be after --  
13 after the elevated track would be built, would that be just  
14 taken away? I mean, that --

15 MR. RHEA VINCENT: It's a temporary track.  
16 We anticipate it being removed.

17 All right. Our next participant here is Mr. David  
18 Crook.

19 MR. DAVID CROOK: I live at 911 Jefferson and  
20 the tracks are, like, probably closer to that wall than to  
21 me, so would there be any chance with them going with the  
22 relocation of the switch track or do we have to go with the  
23 bridge because it would be over -- I mean, if a train come  
24 off, it'd be in my bedroom. It'd be in the top of my house.  
25 I mean, I'm right on it.



1 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Okay. It -- I'm going to  
2 paraphrase here and I'm not trying to twist any words. Your  
3 basic question is: What are the safety issues with a raised  
4 rail? With the railroad that we currently have in place,  
5 we're hitting cars now. Okay. Derailment is just as likely,  
6 if not more likely, where it's at. A raised rail --  
7 railroad, less likely. There's less impact. There's -- the  
8 structure itself is going to be sound. If there's going to  
9 be any problem at all, I don't foresee it.

10 MR. DAVID CROOK: What about as far as  
11 property values go because it would have to take out all my  
12 trees and I have, like, historic trees. It's, like, right on  
13 my property.

14 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Is it on your property?

15 MR. DAVID CROOK: Well, it's like --

16 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Or is it on their  
17 property?

18 MR. DAVID CROOK: I've got a fence and it's  
19 like in the center of -- my trees are in the center of the  
20 fence, so I don't know --

21 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Don't know which one it is  
22 or not. All right. I can answer that question only in  
23 saying that at this time, we plan on having this totally  
24 built on rail property. We don't anticipate going outside  
25 those rail right-of-way limits. If there are some structures

1 or trees that are on that rail line or in that rail  
2 right-of-way, they are subject to be removed.

3 MS. JOYCE LOGAN: Would that -- when they're  
4 constructing it -- I'm talking out of turn, I guess. When  
5 they're constructing this, will that take up our property  
6 with all the construction equipment? Would that be on our  
7 property?

8 MR. RHEA VINCENT: At this point in time, we  
9 don't anticipate any of that, but if there are some problems  
10 that -- later on down the line, yes, they could go out there  
11 and ask to purchase some property from you or -- basically,  
12 that'd be what they do. They'd go out and purchase some  
13 property just for easement or something of that nature to  
14 build the structure. We good?

15 All right. This one I can -- my eyesight isn't  
16 quite as good as it used to be. I think it's George  
17 P-I-R-K-L-N?

18 MR. GREG PIRKLE: Greg Pirkle maybe?

19 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Okay. Sorry about that.

20 MR. GREG PIRKLE: That's all right. Greg  
21 Pirkle. I do -- I don't want to be two-faced about it. I do  
22 want to -- I do think the city needs to do something about  
23 the noise and the train and the horn and things like that.  
24 So I do appreciate the fact that we have to do something  
25 within the City of Tupelo, but three concerns that I have.

1 Number one, I've made an investment in a property downtown  
2 and one concern that I have is making sure that the Mill  
3 Village is a continuation of the downtown. I know we've done  
4 studies and things like that and to me, I just want us to  
5 look at is this -- is this raised railroad track going to  
6 separate downtown from Mill Village and make that a permanent  
7 separation when what we're trying to do is to connect the  
8 two.

9 Number two, much of the investment potential that  
10 I want down there depends significantly on the site line from  
11 downtown to the building that I have and this, according to  
12 the structure that we've seen, comes right about the second  
13 floor of the building that I have purchased down there. You  
14 would not be able to see the building, nor would you be able  
15 to see downtown from the building itself. So I would have a  
16 concern on that as well, construction of the site line  
17 between Mill Village and downtown and vice versa.

18 Finally has to do with the aesthetic of the train  
19 track, of the elevated track itself. I have seen some  
20 elevated tracks and bridges that I think, you know, maybe  
21 that's not so bad to live with, but if it's going to be the  
22 ones that we've seen examples of, the industrial steel and  
23 concrete and things like that, the aesthetics are just not  
24 very appealing and particularly, the drawing going through  
25 Mill Village and downtown where it's very industrial and



1 we're trying to soften that. I just have some serious  
2 concerns and hope that that would be addressed.

3 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Thank you. With respect  
4 to Mill Village, I know we've gotten into -- talked with  
5 Archives and History on this one and I'm not a professional  
6 in that arena. We do have a professional here to cover this  
7 topic. Mr. John Underwood, would you mind stepping forward  
8 and answering these.

9 MR. JOHN UNDERWOOD: When Carnot earlier  
10 mentioned a memorandum agreement was being drafted, the  
11 memorandum agreement is in existence whenever we have  
12 identified impacts to the cultural environment and being the  
13 fact that we have all the construction proposed -- proposed  
14 construction currently within the existing right-of-way,  
15 archeological impacts are negligible with this proposed  
16 route.

17 We're still having proposals in there to monitor  
18 certain sections because this historic track has been in  
19 existence since the late 1880s and for those of you who are  
20 -- know much about Tupelo history, this area was the center  
21 point of the Chickasaw culture back in the 16th, 17th, 18th  
22 centuries. So there's always that potential to encounter  
23 some things in the actual railroad bed itself. So there are  
24 provisions in place. We have professionals monitoring  
25 activities there so that nothing is disturbed and potentially

1     lost because that's part of our collective cultural heritage.

2             In terms of the standing environment, the  
3     architectural environment, there is a lot of important  
4     history in Tupelo related to the actual industrial age of the  
5     railroad coming into existence and, in fact, Tupelo's, you  
6     know, founded along that industrial route. Mill Village and  
7     other areas -- that area, the concepts that are proposed  
8     tonight are just those, concepts. They are probably some of  
9     the most easily replicated kinds to be put on the screen.  
10    There is nowhere written they have to look like that. The  
11    whole purpose of the memorandum agreement is to have  
12    collective buy-in from the citizens of Tupelo into developing  
13    the most context sensitive design and do what we can for the  
14    particular areas that it flows through.

15            There's no reason to have one particular design  
16    consistent with the entire route. We can have different  
17    elements to be more consistent with the surrounding  
18    landscape. It's all about perception with the route as it  
19    comes through town and the perception may need to be changed  
20    as it goes through town because certain areas do not reflect  
21    the same meaning to people that live there. Mill Village was  
22    initially established as an out-growth of the industrial  
23    nature of that portion of Tupelo and there are other areas  
24    that are more residential.

25            There's no reason why you have to make one appear

1     like the other. There should be a conceptual sensitivity to  
2     the entire route that involves having some buy-in to kind of  
3     help design something most appropriate to that area. And  
4     that's what this -- the memorandum is all about is having  
5     this -- if you'll excuse the expression -- blend in as much  
6     as possible to the surrounding concerning landscape that it  
7     -- there's a collective sense of ownership to it. The  
8     assessment would be collective eyesight to be incorporated in  
9     and embraced by the city to kind of incorporate into its  
10    identity. I don't know if that answers your question.

11                   MR. GREG PIRKLE: Have you seen that happen  
12    in other areas?

13                   MR. JOHN UNDERWOOD: Not in Mississippi. To  
14    be honest, this is the first kind of urban project that we've  
15    had, and so, we are kind of encountering a brave new world at  
16    this outlet. Most of our mitigations have dealt with -- on  
17    the archeological side. We've had a lot of those mitigation  
18    hearings and we're having to reach other states and other  
19    (inaudible) and other preservation offices to ask different  
20    groups what are the solutions that you've been presented with  
21    up in the Northeast and then out in the American West.

22                   What has worked there? You know, what kind of  
23    design elements have been best incorporated? What are some  
24    ways to help soften the appearance here? How can you best  
25    incorporate building a retaining wall and have it not look



1     like the Great Wall of China coming through the middle of  
2     your downtown? How can you best incorporate this and make  
3     this, you know, flow into an environment? We're still  
4     gathering these ideas. The conceptions that were drawn up  
5     here are just those, conceptions.

6             The whole idea behind the memorandum agreement is  
7     to have all of Tupelo or at least, you know, those who want  
8     to participate provide suggestions and ideas on how  
9     physically that could work. What kind of materials would you  
10    use, what kind of aesthetic surface treatment would you use  
11    to kind of make this appear as much at home here as we can.  
12    And so, by -- what you've seen here tonight is by no way,  
13    shape or form what it could -- should look like. It's only  
14    what it possibly could look like.

15            So the whole memorandum process is to try to get  
16    as much public buy-in as what we think you might have a good  
17    look at. Hope that answers your question. There is by no  
18    mean, shape or form a set look for any of the structure.  
19    We're just proposing what may be considered as a structured  
20    form in certain areas.

21            MR. RHEA VINCENT: That answer your question,  
22    sir? Okay. Our next participant, Mr. Bill Smith.

23            MR. BILL SMITH: Here. Well, one of my  
24    questions is with this railroad being elevated at -- what's  
25    the height? Possibly?

1 MR. RHEA VINCENT: It ranges in height from  
2 the bottom -- for the rails, the bottom of the construction  
3 itself is about 16 to 17 feet for construction and cars to go  
4 under and it'd be about five or six more feet above that for  
5 the concrete part of it. The steel trusses will go up a good  
6 bit higher because we have to form around it or we're going  
7 to have to go and design something else other than what you  
8 see there in the picture.

9 MR. BILL SMITH: Okay.

10 MR. RHEA VINCENT: That's just a proposal in  
11 the picture.

12 MR. BILL SMITH: Okay. Well, my concern  
13 would be, like, I would hate for us to look kind of like  
14 Jackson, Mississippi, with the train coming through town and  
15 it creates a division and you can distinctly drive through  
16 Jackson and see that when you're passing that area. And I  
17 would hate for our downtown to be divided. As a small town  
18 as we are and we are trying to mend ourselves to be better  
19 citizens and better stewards among ourselves and friends that  
20 with a railroad that high coming through the center of town,  
21 it would create a problem. That's just a personal opinion.

22 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Is that a statement or  
23 would you like me to try to answer it?

24 MR. BILL SMITH: If you can.

25 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Okay. I think we're

1 following along the lines of what Mr. Underwood just said  
2 here. Will there be a train here? Yes. Can you take this  
3 proposal? Yes. Does it have to look like anything else  
4 you've ever seen? No. It's up to y'all basically of what  
5 y'all want out there. But there is a limit. I mean, money  
6 is going to play a role in this. At this point in time, all  
7 we're doing here is proposing what it might look like. We  
8 haven't gone through any of the procedures that were to  
9 beautify the route, although we do have some examples on our  
10 other screens over here if y'all would like to look at them.  
11 And that's about all I could say about the statement you  
12 made.

13 Our next participant is Ms. Karen Keeney. There  
14 you go, ma'am.

15 MS. KAREN KEENEY: I'm the chair of the  
16 Historic Preservation Commission. This impacts a lot of our  
17 historic resources within Tupelo, especially Mill Village.  
18 This elevated structure would actually divide Mill Village.  
19 Mill Village is actually on both sides of the railroad track.  
20 And we've seen the draft of the MOA and I think that -- you  
21 know, we're sending in some written comments to that, so this  
22 is not just a two-minute blurb, you know, so -- of what we'll  
23 send in.

24 But one of the things that we would like to see  
25 is, obviously, a no-build alternative happen, but the second



1 item is if this went forward and -- we would actually like to  
2 see more mitigation efforts than what's offered in the MOA.  
3 We'd like to see more than just a survey of the resources  
4 that are going to be effected, but possibly some grant money  
5 for those impacted areas because this will impact them in a  
6 negative way when it comes to property values.

7 The vibration area -- I live in Gravlee, so it  
8 would effect my personal property and there is a vibration  
9 aspect. Carolyn and Joyce both live in Gravlee and they can  
10 tell you their walls shake and stuff like that and the  
11 vibration would actually go up, increase, even though there  
12 may not be structural damage.

13 So there are some impacts that would effect those  
14 properties in a negative way, so we'd like to see some seed  
15 money for those areas, not just Mill Village, but future  
16 potential historic neighborhoods of Gravlee and Joyner that  
17 may not be relevant and listed on the national register  
18 today, but are indeed old enough to be listed on the national  
19 register and, therefore, are effected resources. So we'd  
20 like to see a little bit more given for that.

21 As well as in the MOA, there's 30 days given for  
22 replies and buy-ins from the neighborhoods, the commission,  
23 the city to give anything that we want to add to it after  
24 that -- you know, the final draft is given and we don't  
25 believe that 30 days is enough time to get an organized group

1 of people together and be able to formulate exactly what we  
2 want it to look like and exactly what we want. So I think  
3 that we would -- we would prefer to see a longer timetable  
4 for that, a minimum of 60 days to 90 days that we can  
5 actually give you a better idea.

6 And I think that maybe one thing that people have  
7 touched on a little bit is the aesthetics. The aesthetics is  
8 the -- what you're showing here is, like, a one-way  
9 structural system, you know, the industrial concrete ties and  
10 -- which we understand and realize that, but we need to see  
11 some other alternatives of structural systems, not just  
12 applied facades of the actual built-up retaining wall because  
13 those are all applied systems, but actually a different  
14 structural system needs to be probably presented to the city  
15 for us to have comment on.

16 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Okay. I don't know if I  
17 have a question in there.

18 MS. KAREN KEENEY: There's not really a  
19 question.

20 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Okay. As we said earlier,  
21 the design is not -- has not been finalized. We haven't  
22 started on it. No one has started on the design. It will be  
23 between the citizens of Tupelo and Tupelo itself on what they  
24 really want out of this. Of course, cost will be a factor.  
25 I have to bring that up. It always is, but that doesn't say

1       that we can't do it.

2               With respect to the MOA, I'm thinking -- John, and  
3       help me with this -- that 30-day period, can it be extended?

4               MR. UNDERWOOD: Well, the spirit of the MOA  
5       was designed so that whenever we're -- the whole purpose  
6       around those various subsections and review period was to get  
7       some kind of consensus on agreeing that that may be a good  
8       approach. I don't -- I wasn't trying to portray that we need  
9       to make a decision on appearances in a 30-day period. That  
10      was never part of my -- that was never part of the spirit of  
11      the MOA.

12              The MOA was designed to see if -- if these are  
13      elements we can all agree on to be mitigation approaches.  
14      And when it got down to the point of drafting actual concepts  
15      and renderings and -- it would be a far longer process than  
16      just 30 days. That's what was communicated. That's my fault  
17      and I apologize.

18              MS. KAREN KEENEY: Well, it's more than just  
19      that. Like, you're wanting input from the neighborhood  
20      associations that will be involved, the preservation  
21      commission. All these things meet sometimes quarterly. They  
22      don't necessarily always meet every month. Neighbor  
23      associations meet every other month or quarterly a year. And  
24      so, you're -- they all have different structures and I know  
25      we're not on the same timetable and I think that the 30 days



1 is too long (sic) to ask somebody that may not even meet that  
2 month that it's coming out to get back any type of answer,  
3 even if it's just, look this over and see if you agree with  
4 it. You might not be able to get those people together in 30  
5 days. So I think that that's a big concern.

6 MR. JOHN UNDERWOOD: And that's fine. As I  
7 said earlier, this MOA is different than just about anything  
8 else we've ever drafted because we're dealing with  
9 circumstances we've never really dealt with before in these  
10 resources environment. So there is no reason why we can't  
11 have it in a different format. As Carnot said earlier, the  
12 MOA is in a draft format for this reason itself.

13 Each MOA, when we design it for a project, is  
14 going to be specific to that project. We have -- it may have  
15 a general form that's recognized as a process, but each --  
16 the language and the specifics are project individualized.  
17 And so, there is no reason why the specific details and  
18 stipulations that are being spelled out in this agreement  
19 cannot be tailored for this project that's (inaudible) what's  
20 being done.

21 And some things that are being kicked around  
22 currently are, you know, education sponsorship ideas or  
23 possibly ways of fostering some kind of preservation money.  
24 That has been kicked around before and (inaudible),  
25 especially following different agreements in place and we

1 want those communities to have those kind of reciprocal --  
2 you know, seed money in place and educational opportunities  
3 to have, you know, local focus groups setup that are more  
4 cognizant of what the federal regulations and laws are for  
5 what the citizens can and cannot do in certain 106  
6 situations.

7 So all of these are still on the table. And,  
8 again, the draft is just that, a draft and I'm trying to get  
9 all the comments I can because I want to have as much buy-in  
10 for all of those that are effected as I can and, you know,  
11 the limit to this agreement is far more reaching than the  
12 previous things that you've had. I'm being given the yank on  
13 my Oscar speech.

14 MR. RHEA VINCENT: I apologize for that,  
15 John. What I'm going to offer to you, young lady -- I  
16 apologize because I forget your name. What I would have John  
17 do is call you.

18 MS. KAREN KEENEY: I've got his contact  
19 information, so -- and I'm going send him my comments.

20 MR. RHEA VINCENT: We have no problems with  
21 this type of communication. This is an opportunity for  
22 helping Tupelo along. Our next participant will be  
23 Ms. Doyce Deas.

24 MS. DOYCE DEAS: I'm Doyce Deas. I am a  
25 former member of the city council and I'm a current member of

1 the Historic Preservation Commission. I would like to go on  
2 record as being adamantly opposed to this plan. I don't care  
3 if it's gold-plated and enshrined with roses, it will not be  
4 attractive and it will be the Great Wall of Tupelo. It's a  
5 psychological as well as a physical barrier within our city.  
6 We're working too hard to pull all of our neighborhoods  
7 together and this will only exacerbate many problems that we  
8 have now. I am adamantly opposed to this. I think to spend  
9 almost 400 million dollars on something that could have a  
10 better solution is really outrageous and if we've got 400  
11 million dollars laying around, I think we can find a better  
12 use for it in Tupelo.

13 As far as the safety issue, it's often mentioned  
14 that it's difficult, you know, for people to get to the  
15 hospital, but as far as I know, no one has ever died sitting  
16 there waiting for that train to go through. The elevation,  
17 16, 18 feet in the air to me seems quite hazardous. If any  
18 of the derailments could occur, it would just be -- they  
19 would become projectiles and I just think that there are  
20 better ways to solve this issue.

21 Tupelo exists because of the railroad track. It  
22 is our history and we can -- if you put down -- if you put up  
23 gates and speed up the trains, you can get them through town  
24 much more quickly. It's much more cost effective and quite  
25 honestly, I just think this is an exercise in futility.



1     There are better solutions to this problem.

2                   MR. RHEA VINCENT:  Thank you, ma'am.  At this  
3     time, we'll open the floor to the general public for  
4     questions.  If there are any questions that you'd like to ask  
5     of the consultants or MDOT, we'll be more than happy to  
6     entertain them right now.  Are there any -- is there anybody  
7     -- yes, sir.

8                   MR. RUSSELL PESKO:  If memory serves reading  
9     the paper on the original articles and proposals, the one  
10    thing I was particularly shocked at is the alternative of  
11    taking the railroad tracks around the city instead of  
12    building a bridge through there and they were talking about  
13    something, like, 780 million dollars in cost.  And there's  
14    nothing but a lot of, what, some farm land out there that I  
15    can't believe would be that expensive to buy and you're  
16    telling me that a raised bridge, which, obviously, is not  
17    going to be inexpensive to build, there's going to be that  
18    much of a cost difference?  And to echo what the lady just  
19    said, that 400 million dollars, there's got to be a better  
20    way, and I agree with that, and I also agree with the idea  
21    that -- I'm not --

22                   I belong to a lot of groups.  I'm not speaking as  
23    part of any of them, just as myself, but essentially, you put  
24    a bridge through the middle of town, you're going to create  
25    the wrong side of the tracks.  The South Gloster area has

1     been fighting hard to stay alive and come back since all the  
2     business and all the new stuff is up by Barnes Crossing. And  
3     that will be a barrier and, you know, we're trying to pull  
4     people together, not divide them, but I just still can't  
5     believe -- I mean, some of these maps on here quite don't  
6     make sense to me, at least not from what I remember reading  
7     originally, and I fail to believe that we can't find a  
8     reasonably-priced route around the city as opposed to saying,  
9     look, we're going to run a bridge through here or not. So  
10    these other alternatives, are they really that expensive?

11                 MR. RHEA VINCENT: The other alternatives,  
12    yes, sir, they are. Let me get your name first.

13                 MR. RUSSELL PESKO: Russell Pesko.

14                 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Mr. Pesko, yes, all the  
15    other alternatives are that expensive. Especially the ones  
16    that are in the lower areas of the streams and creeks that we  
17    have out there. In those areas, we're basically dealing with  
18    floodplains or floodways and in those areas, we end up  
19    building on bridges to keep the rail out of those waters.  
20    You've got to let these people continue to produce a product  
21    there, their rail line.

22                 The range in costs have been from the 385 million  
23    up to a billion and a half with a viaduct, believe it or not  
24    -- excuse me, not the viaduct, but the trench. That was a  
25    rough estimate. We knew that that one just wasn't going to

1 fly. We've done what we could with the estimates that we  
2 had.

3 MR. RUSSELL PESKO: Well, what about that one  
4 fellow's suggestion, for instance, of using the right of way  
5 along the highway, along 78 where you've got the median  
6 there? You would have the infrastructure and there wouldn't  
7 be a lot of bridge work to be done. The sewer pipes are  
8 already there. I would think that you could get a lot of  
9 miles of track taken care of, not to mention it's easily  
10 accessible, although that's not in one of the plans, but I'm  
11 just curious why that was overlooked or why that's not  
12 feasible.

13 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Actually, it was  
14 dismissed.

15 MR. RUSSELL PESKO: Why?

16 MR. RHEA VINCENT: For the most part because  
17 if you try and parallel the road with the rail, because of  
18 the fluctuation of the road's grade, up and down of the road,  
19 versus what a rail line requires, that is, a little, flat  
20 line and that's it, then you end up with a disparity so vast  
21 that you have to move the rail further out away from the  
22 road. I don't think I can answer your question there.

23 Basically, a road can have a four percent slope on  
24 it, as much as a four percent grade. A rail line can have a  
25 maximum of one percent. That's -- yeah. That's three feet

1 for every 100-feet difference. So a road can really get up  
2 quickly where a rail line has to stay flat. Paralleling --  
3 and we did this in MDOT itself -- I believe it was 78 out  
4 there? What would happen here is if we kept the rail  
5 parallel to 78, what we'd end up doing is creating a huge  
6 trench right there 20-some-odd feet deep and creating a river  
7 that just basically flowed right into the Natchez Trace.  
8 That's what would happen. That's why we did not pursue that  
9 alternative.

10 Yes, sir. I'll need your name.

11 MR. GEORGE COPEN: George Copen. Okay. Why  
12 couldn't we -- I know it's more expensive to go around  
13 Tupelo. Could we not float a city, a state or a government  
14 bond and pay it out long-term and keep Tupelo like it is?

15 MR. RHEA VINCENT: Okay. Very good question.  
16 We did not address the issue of floating bonds or methods of  
17 payment in this document. That will be for the City of  
18 Tupelo to work out later on down the line. I don't know how  
19 else to answer that one except that we did not do that.  
20 Methods of payment for these projects usually come about  
21 after the EEA has come into play -- or EIS has come into  
22 play.

23 Anybody else?

24 Well, ladies and gentlemen, that concludes our  
25 question and answer session here. We'll still be out here



1 till seven o'clock answering personal questions about the  
2 project. Please feel free to grab a snack, fill out a  
3 comment card or come and look at our pictures here. Thank  
4 you.

5 (Whereupon, there were no further comments  
6 given to the court reporter and the public hearing was  
7 adjourned at 7:00 p.m.)

## C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI )

COUNTY OF CHICKASAW )

RE: PUBLIC HEARING ON TUPELO RAILROAD RELOCATION PLANNING  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

I, Kathryn H. Boyer, CSR #1349, a Notary Public within  
and for the aforesaid county and state, duly commissioned and  
acting, hereby certify that the foregoing proceedings were  
taken before me at the time and place set forth above; that  
the statements were written by me in machine shorthand; that  
the statements were thereafter transcribed by me, or under my  
direct supervision, by means of computer-aided transcription,  
constituting a true and correct transcription of the  
proceedings; and that the witness was by me duly sworn to  
testify to the truth and nothing but the truth in this cause.

I further certify that I am not a relative or employee  
of any of the parties, or of counsel, nor am I financially or  
otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

Witness my hand and seal on this 14th day of August,  
2011.

My Commission Expires:  
June 25, 2015

CSR #1349  
Notary Public





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<b>testify</b> 34:17	21:20 28:23	2:25 3:4,17	<b>versus</b> 31:19	11:21
<b>testimony</b> 5:23	29:24	4:16,17 5:1,11	<b>viaduct</b> 30:23,24	<b>way</b> 11:21,24
<b>thank</b> 10:12	<b>Trace</b> 32:7	5:13,15,21 8:4	<b>vibration</b> 23:7,8	20:12 23:6,14
17:3 29:2 33:3	<b>track</b> 3:9,21	8:12 9:6,21,21	23:11	29:20 31:4
<b>that'd</b> 15:12	12:2,3 13:13	9:22,23 11:7	<b>vice</b> 16:17	<b>ways</b> 19:24
<b>They'd</b> 15:12	13:15,22 16:5	12:22,23 15:25	<b>video</b> 10:10	26:23 28:20
<b>thing</b> 11:1 24:6	16:19,19 17:18	17:20 18:4,12	<b>view</b> 11:25	<b>website</b> 7:11
29:10	22:19 28:21	18:23 20:7	<b>views</b> 6:6	<b>weight</b> 7:16
<b>things</b> 15:23	31:9	22:17 24:23,23	<b>Village</b> 16:3,6	<b>welcome</b> 4:25
16:4,23 17:23	<b>tracks</b> 2:6 3:18	27:22 28:4,12	16:17,25 17:4	<b>went</b> 3:6 23:1
22:24 25:21	3:25 12:5	28:21 32:13,14	18:6,21 22:17	<b>West</b> 19:21
26:21 27:12	13:20 16:20	32:18 34:5	22:18,19 23:15	<b>Wetlands</b> 9:1
<b>think</b> 10:24	29:11,25	<b>Tupelo's</b> 18:5	<b>VINCENT</b>	<b>we'll</b> 10:22
15:16,22 16:20	<b>traffic</b> 2:18 4:2,4	<b>turn</b> 6:16 15:4	10:12 11:2,5	22:22 29:3,5
20:16 21:25	4:6,9,12,13	<b>twist</b> 14:2	11:19 12:8	32:25
	8:11	<b>two</b> 4:8 10:20	13:15 14:1,14	<b>we're</b> 10:14 14:5

16:7 17:1,17 19:18 20:3,19 21:6,25 22:7 22:21 25:5,25 26:8 28:6 30:3 30:9,17 <b>we've</b> 16:3,12,22 17:4 19:14,17 22:20 26:8,9 28:10 31:1 <b>white</b> 11:22 <b>Whittington</b> 5:12,12 <b>Wildlife</b> 9:19 <b>Willie</b> 5:14,14 <b>Winkle</b> 5:18 <b>wish</b> 5:25 6:14 11:23 <b>wishing</b> 10:16 <b>witness</b> 34:16,21 <b>words</b> 14:2 <b>work</b> 2:21 20:9 31:7 32:18 <b>worked</b> 19:22 <b>working</b> 28:6 <b>world</b> 19:15 <b>wouldn't</b> 31:6 <b>written</b> 7:3,9 18:10 22:21 34:12 <b>wrong</b> 29:25 <b>www.gomdot....</b> 7:12	<b>1</b> 1 2:5 <b>100</b> 3:21 <b>100-feet</b> 32:1 <b>104289-101000</b> 8:2 <b>106</b> 27:5 <b>11</b> 1:11 2:4 <b>11593</b> 8:24 <b>11988</b> 8:25 <b>11990</b> 9:1 <b>12th</b> 7:14 <b>128</b> 8:22 <b>12898</b> 9:2 <b>14th</b> 34:21 <b>1500-1508</b> 8:23 <b>16</b> 21:3 28:17 <b>16th</b> 17:21 17 21:3 <b>17th</b> 17:21 18 28:17 <b>18th</b> 17:21 <b>1880s</b> 17:19 <b>1964</b> 8:20 <b>1968</b> 8:21 <b>1969</b> 9:9 <b>1990</b> 9:5	<b>4</b> 4 2:16 <b>4:00</b> 1:11 5:20 5:22 <b>40</b> 8:22 <b>400</b> 28:9,10 29:19	<b>5</b> 5 2:25 <b>5:00</b> 7:14 <b>5:30</b> 5:22,23	<b>6</b> 6 3:2 8:19 <b>60</b> 24:4 <b>662-842-8345</b> 4:18	<b>7</b> 7 3:8 <b>7:00</b> 5:20,24 33:7 <b>761</b> 1:24 <b>771</b> 8:24 <b>78</b> 31:5 32:3,5 <b>780</b> 29:13	<b>8</b> 8 8:20	<b>9</b> 90 24:4 911 13:19
<b>Y</b> <b>yank</b> 27:12 <b>yards</b> 3:21 <b>yeah</b> 31:25 <b>year</b> 25:23 <b>young</b> 27:15 <b>y'all</b> 22:4,5,10	<b>2</b> 2 2:6 <b>20-some-odd</b> 32:6 <b>2010</b> 1:11 <b>2011</b> 2:4 7:14 34:22 <b>2015</b> 34:25 <b>23</b> 8:22,23 <b>25</b> 4:21 34:25						
<b>S</b> <b>\$2,500</b> 12:14 <b>\$8,500</b> 12:15	<b>3</b> 3 2:14 <b>30</b> 10:11 23:21 23:25 25:16,25 26:4 <b>30-day</b> 25:3,9 <b>375</b> 5:21 <b>385</b> 11:8,9,13 30:22 <b>38802-0761</b> 1:25						
<b>#</b> <b>#1349</b> 1:23 34:8 34:24							



CECIL VICK'S NOTES ON THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE TUPELO RAILS  
PROJECT  
Transcribed 09-13-2011

Considering the attendance at other public meetings for this project, the formal public hearing had relatively low turnout. Despite that it went smoothly and well. It was an open forum hearing with two formal presentations and two question and answer sessions. This format worked well for both MDOT and for the public. Everyone I talked to was happy with the venue, the displays, and the presentations.

The local politicians, representing the people, expressed these sentiments:

*The Mayor:*

- He clearly likes the preferred alternative more than any bypass.
- He has concerns about the City assuming maintenance responsibilities for the proposed structure.
- He recognizes that some citizens are concerned that a long railroad bridge could become a hangout for homeless people.
- He thinks that it might be possible to elevate the railroad over Eason Boulevard only.
- He has no idea where the city would get \$400 million to construct the project.
  - The city does not have it.
  - MDOT said they do not have it.
  - Traditionally you build such projects with earmarks, but earmarks of that magnitude are very unlikely.

*The City Council:*

- At least one councilperson does not like construction on fill, because it would act as a wall to separate neighborhoods.
- The Council is also concerned about the viaduct becoming a refuge for the homeless.

*The Historic Community:*

- The Historic Preservation Commission, and some residents of the historic community, opposed the preferred alternative. They say MDOT should put up more gates and increase the speeds of the trains.
- A developer with investments in the Mill Village Community expressed his concerns that the project would destroy the area's historic integrity and ruin his investment.

*The Public in general:*

- The citizens I talked to generally liked the proposal.

- Generally any opposition was over historic concerns and how lessening the integrity of the historic district could diminish property values.
- Basically, among the private citizens there was relatively little opposition—even by those who live adjacent to the tracks.
- I talked to a heart patient who explained the critical nature of not having the train block access to the hospital.
- Among the people I talked to, there was strong opposition to putting the structure on fill and using retaining walls. The people did not want aesthetically pleasing retaining walls—they wanted the transparency beneath a bridge. Otherwise, they saw the project as creating a wall dividing the City.
- Most people thought that \$400 million was just too much money to spend to fix the existing problem.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Craig V. Vining". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Craig" and last name "Vining" clearly legible, and "V." as a middle initial.

## APPENDIX F

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### WRITTEN COMMENTS



# Public Hearing COMMENT SHEET

August 11, 2011, Tupelo, MS

## PROJECT BEING CONSIDERED

### Tupelo Railroad Relocation

Environmental Division FAX Number: 601-359-7355

E-mail: [environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us)

[www.goMDOT.com](http://www.goMDOT.com)

Name Mary Connor Adeack Telephone 662-205-4696  
Address 1304 Lawhan Drive  
City Tupelo State MS Zip 38804

Which best describes your ~~primary interest~~?

Affected	<u>Resident</u>
Concerned	Business
Other _____	Landowner
	Other _____

What are the major issues?

Relocations	Noise
Wetlands	Safety
Wildlife	Social
Traffic Volume	Economics
Other <u>neighborhoods</u>	

MDOT is interested in your comments about the proposed project. Please indicate:

The alternative you like best and why: no build

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Issues and/or concerns about the project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Recommendations for the project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE SUBMIT AT THE HEARING OR MAIL TO ADDRESS ON REVERSE SIDE WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

Visit us on the web at [www.goMDOT.com](http://www.goMDOT.com), or e-mail [environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us)



*George J. Copen*

1213 Zentwood  
Tupelo, MS 38801  
Phone: 662-844-5267  
e-mail: gcopen@bellsouth.net

August 12, 2011

The alternative you like the best and why: **Alternative L or J** – Rail traffic would swing around Tupelo preserving our way of life. I know there are issues with the Indian Nations, wet lands, and costs. But you must also look at what will attract more people to live in Tupelo, and how many people would leave looking for an **All-American City** where you can live and grow a family.

Issues and/or concerns about the project: The **Build Alternitve** would disrupt lives and traffic for at least 24 months, and most likely beyond. Although the elevated tracks may be made attractive, I do not think the city of Tupelo is prepared to put into its budget funds to clean the blank canvas the concrete posts offer to graffiti artists.

Recommendation for the project: The project does need to move forward. This could be accomplished by creative funding; perhaps by funding with long-term bonds, 30 years or beyond (when the railroads first put in the tracks I'm sure the paid for their construction is less time). As Mr. Vincent indicated "Not even Congress has the funds right now".

Cc: Mayor Jack Reed Jr.  
The Editor, Daily Journal

## Eric Jefferson

---

**From:** Vincent, Rhea <vincent@mdot.state.ms.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2011 3:19 PM  
**To:** Eric Jefferson  
**Subject:** FW: Tupelo Railroad Relocation

---

**From:** Pat Falkner [<mailto:Pat.Falkner@tupeloms.gov>]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 15, 2011 7:48 AM  
**To:** Environmental\_Comments  
**Subject:** Tupelo Railroad Relocation

The proposed elevated structure for the railroad would be visually disruptive to a large part of the older section of Tupelo, which the city has been trying to make more attractive for residential location and reinvestment. The elevated structure would undermine this goal of our comprehensive plan. The plan's transportation goals refer to the need to study the Crosstown intersection and the possibility of relocating the railroad, but this alternative would impose unwanted change to the character of several older neighborhoods. Preservation of those neighborhoods is of greater importance than eliminating the train-caused traffic delays. Outside the question of environmental impact, the estimated cost of the elevated structure makes the alternative financially unrealistic, to put it mildly. Neither local taxpayers nor any other taxpayers should be asked to pay for this.

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## Eric Jefferson

---

**From:** Vincent, Rhea <vincent@mdot.state.ms.us>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 28, 2011 3:20 PM  
**To:** Eric Jefferson  
**Subject:** FW: Tupelo Railroad changes

**From:** Eric Feng [\[mailto:tfsincms@bellsouth.net\]](mailto:tfsincms@bellsouth.net)  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 07, 2011 7:42 AM  
**To:** Environmental\_Comments  
**Subject:** Re: Tupelo Railroad changes

I wonder what's the cost if the train go underground instead of raising it plus the underground structure can serve as shelter for people if tornado hits.

Eric Feng

President  
The Feng's System, Inc.

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August 10, 2011

To: MDOT

CC: Mayor Jack Reed and Tupelo City Council

We are dismayed to learn that the \$2 million railroad study results suggest that the best solution for train delays in downtown Tupelo is to elevate the tracks. This would prove to be very detrimental to the revitalization of downtown Tupelo...property values would decrease, the noise from the faster traveling trains would be annoying and vagrants would soon be living under the tracks since that area would not be able to be utilized for anything else. Aesthetically, Crosstown and Mill Village's appearance would be destroyed by tracks 20 feet above street level. The Mill Village area, with many recent renovation improvements, would become blighted again. In recent years, more development has taken place north of Main Street; the elevated tracks would further divide the City into two areas.

We live on Robins Street, less than a mile from Crosstown. Therefore, we travel through that intersection numerous times daily. Although it is a slight inconvenience to be stopped by trains, most citizens are used to this so simply add a few extra minutes to their travel time. We aren't disturbed by the sounds from current train travel through Tupelo, but would be by the sounds made if trains traveled at a fast speed and higher altitude.

Ideally the tracks should be moved so that the trains do not run through the downtown area; however we realize that is cost prohibitive. We suggest simply adding crossing arms at every intersection in the downtown area so that the trains don't have to whistle as they travel through the city limits. This would also allow the trains to go through at a faster speed so that the intersections wouldn't be blocked for as long as they are now.

During this difficult economic period in our country's history it makes no sense to even consider spending a possible \$400 million to elevate trains in Tupelo. Please look for alternatives that would make better financial sense and that would help maintain the present aesthetic appeal to our residential, as well as commercial areas in downtown Tupelo. We are totally opposed to this costly, preposterous plan to elevate the tracks.

Sincerely,

Dr. and Mrs. Don McGukin

502 Robins Street

Tupelo, MS 38804





## Public Hearing

# COMMENT SHEET

August 11, 2011, Tupelo, MS

### PROJECT BEING CONSIDERED

## Tupelo Railroad Relocation

Environmental Division FAX Number: 601-359-7355

E-mail: [environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us)

[www.goMDOT.com](http://www.goMDOT.com)

Name Brenda Crook Telephone 731-432-3038

Address 911 Jefferson

City Tupelo State MS Zip 38804

Which best describes your primary interest?

Affected

Resident X

Concerned

Business

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Landowner X

Other \_\_\_\_\_

What are the major issues?

Relocations

Noise

Wetlands

Safety

Wildlife

Social

Traffic Volume

Economics

Other \_\_\_\_\_

MDOT is interested in your comments about the proposed project. Please indicate:

The alternative you like best and why: I purchased my house because I Love trains, I am against the Bridge being built. I would ruin the neighbor hood and my property. R&R being 25ft from my front door. I just paid my house off- and have to have a heart transplant- This would ruin my dreams of loving trains

Issues and/or concerns about the project: Would ruin my property, cause more crime, and seperate the city, there are not 20-25 trains per-day more like 10-15 if that.

Recommendations for the project: Relocate switch yard, put up crossing gates, speed trains up. This would help with traffic, and take care of problems, plus save money.

PLEASE SUBMIT AT THE HEARING OR MAIL TO ADDRESS ON REVERSE SIDE WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

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# Public Hearing COMMENT SHEET

August 11, 2011, Tupelo, MS

## PROJECT BEING CONSIDERED

### Tupelo Railroad Relocation

Environmental Division FAX Number: 601-359-7355

E-mail: [environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us)

[www.goMDOT.com](http://www.goMDOT.com)

Name Lisa Hansberger Telephone 662-678-6769  
Address 1229 Houston St  
City Tupelo State MS Zip 38804

Which best describes your primary interest?

Affected

Concerned

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Resident

Business

Landowner

Other \_\_\_\_\_

What are the major issues?

Relocations

Wetlands

Wildlife

Traffic Volume

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Noise

Safety

Social

Economics

MDOT is interested in your comments about the proposed project. Please indicate:

The alternative you like best and why: rerouting tracks along  
45 & 78 highways / interstate

Issues and/or concerns about the project: The economic impact on  
neighborhoods with an elevated track running through  
the center of our urban area.

Recommendations for the project: no more studies, either  
reroute OR - double gate all crossings,  
cease the use of horns and speed up the trains  
change the switch point.

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Public Hearing

# COMMENT SHEET

August 11, 2011, Tupelo, MS

## PROJECT BEING CONSIDERED

### Tupelo Railroad Relocation

Environmental Division FAX Number: 601-359-7355

E-mail: [environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us)

[www.goMDOT.com](http://www.goMDOT.com)

Name Shale Henderson Telephone 662-255-5725  
Address 144 Rd. 784  
City Tupelo State MS Zip 38801

Which best describes your primary interest?

Affected	Resident
Concerned	Business
Other _____	Landowner
	Other _____

What are the major issues?

Relocations	Noise
Wetlands	Safety
Wildlife	Social
Traffic Volume	Economics
Other _____	

MDOT is interested in your comments about the proposed project. Please indicate:

The alternative you like best and why: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Issues and/or concerns about the project: I do not want Alternative  
R - please!  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Recommendations for the project: Build the overpass,  
if necessary, or let it exist as it  
is ~~if possible~~ rather than going around -  
do not push Tupelo's problems to the  
country. We do not want the noise  
of a train.

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## Public Hearing

# COMMENT SHEET

August 11, 2011, Tupelo, MS

### PROJECT BEING CONSIDERED

## Tupelo Railroad Relocation

Environmental Division FAX Number: 601-359-7355

E-mail: [environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us)

[www.goMDOT.com](http://www.goMDOT.com)

Name RALPH HENDERSON Telephone 566-7530

Address 144 RO. 784

City Tupelo State MS Zip 38801

Which best describes your primary interest?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Affected  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resident  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concerned | Business                                      |
| Other _____                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landowner |
|   | Other _____                                   |

What are the major issues?

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Relocations    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise     |
| Wetlands       | Safety  |
| Wildlife       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social    |
| Traffic Volume | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economics |
| Other _____    |   |

MDOT is interested in your comments about the proposed project. Please indicate:

The alternative you like best and why: ALTERNATIVE M  
THIS IS A TUPELO PROBLEM AND NOT THE  
COUNTY PROBLEM. TUPELO NEEDS TO SOLVE IT  
BUT KEEP THE TRACKS IN TUPELO.

Issues and/or concerns about the project: \_\_\_\_\_

I DO NOT WANT ALTERNATIVE K

Recommendations for the project: ALTERNATIVE M

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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# Public Hearing COMMENT SHEET

August 11, 2011, Tupelo, MS

## PROJECT BEING CONSIDERED

### Tupelo Railroad Relocation

Environmental Division FAX Number: 601-359-7355

E-mail: [environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us)

[www.goMDOT.com](http://www.goMDOT.com)

Name JACQUE PRATHER Telephone 842-8345

Address 1826 W JACKSON

City TUPELO State MS Zip 38801

Which best describes your primary interest?

Affected Resident  
Concerned Business  
Other Landowner  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

What are the major issues?

Relocations Noise  
Wetlands Safety  
Wildlife Social  
Traffic Volume Economics  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

MDOT is interested in your comments about the proposed project. Please indicate:

The alternative you like best and why: ALTERNATIVE L  
TAKES TRAIN OUT OF PRESENT PATH  
THAT CORRECTS EXISTING PROBLEMS  
"WE DO NOT NEED THE GREAT WALL OF TUPELO"

Issues and/or concerns about the project: THE WALL WILL AGAIN  
DEVIDE TUPELO. YEARS AGO TUPELO WAS  
KNOWN AS 3 AREAS. (1) TUPELO - (2) SOUTH  
OF FRISCO AS SOUTH TUPELO AND (3)  
EAST OF G.M.D. AS SHAKIE RAG.  
THIS WILL REVERT TO A SEPERATION OF TUPELO

Recommendations for the project: GO AROUND OR DO NOTHING.

QUESTION: WHO WOULD PAY THE  
\$1,000 PER DAY UPKEEP

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# Public Hearing COMMENT SHEET

August 11, 2011, Tupelo, MS

## PROJECT BEING CONSIDERED

### Tupelo Railroad Relocation

Environmental Division FAX Number: 601-359-7355

E-mail: [environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us)

[www.goMDOT.com](http://www.goMDOT.com)

Name Russell PESKO Telephone 662 680-3093

Address 1901 CARDINAL

City TUPELO State MS Zip 38801

Which best describes your primary interest?

Affected	<u>Resident</u>
Concerned	Business
Other _____	Landowner
	Other _____

What are the major issues?

Relocations	Noise
Wetlands	Safety
Wildlife	Social
<u>Traffic Volume</u>	<u>Economics</u>
Other _____	

MDOT is interested in your comments about the proposed project. Please indicate:

The alternative you like best and why: PLAN E - LESS INVASIVE

Issues and/or concerns about the project: A BRIDGE THRU THE MIDDLE  
OF TOWN WILL HURT BUSINESS ALONG S. GLOSTER,  
WHICH HAS BEEN FIGHTING FOR SURVIVAL SINCE THE N-GLOSTER  
BARNES CROSSING COMPLEX, AS WELL AS LOWER PROPERTY  
VALUE S OF THE TRUCKS - YOU WOULD CREATE "WALK SIDE OF THE  
TRUCKS"

Recommendations for the project: GO AROUND THE CITY AS MUCH AS  
POSSIBLE AND NO LARGE BIG BRIDGE RIGHT THRU  
THE HEART OF TOWN

PLEASE SUBMIT AT THE HEARING OR MAIL TO ADDRESS ON REVERSE SIDE WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

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Public Hearing

# COMMENT SHEET

August 11, 2011, Tupelo, MS

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### Tupelo Railroad Relocation

Environmental Division FAX Number: 601-359-7355

E-mail: [environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us)

[www.goMDOT.com](http://www.goMDOT.com)

Name John Carruth Telephone 662-322-6842

Address 511 Magazine

City Tupelo State MS Zip 38804

Which best describes your primary interest?

Affected

Resident

Concerned

~~Business~~

Other all listed

Landowner

Other all listed

What are the major issues?

Relocations

Noise

Wetlands

Safety

Wildlife

Social

Traffic Volume

Economics

Other \_\_\_\_\_

MDOT is interested in your comments about the proposed project. Please indicate:

The alternative you like best and why: None mentioned  
Crossing arms or nothing.

Issues and/or concerns about the project: The railroad is & was  
a reason for Tupelo to prosper. Not as bad as people  
make it. We should be ashamed to expect  
anyone to spend that amount of money.

Recommendations for the project: Small town - not metropolitan  
area. Let our ourselves and go on.  
None of the citizens want this and I live close  
trying to improve our area. Not destroy

PLEASE SUBMIT AT THE HEARING OR MAIL TO ADDRESS ON REVERSE SIDE WITHIN 10 DAYS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING

Visit us on the web at [www.goMDOT.com](http://www.goMDOT.com), or e-mail [environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us)





Public Hearing

# COMMENT SHEET

August 11, 2011, Tupelo, MS

## PROJECT BEING CONSIDERED

### Tupelo Railroad Relocation

Environmental Division FAX Number: 601-359-7355

E-mail: [environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:environmentalcomments@mdot.state.ms.us)

[www.goMDOT.com](http://www.goMDOT.com)

Name CAL SMITH Telephone 841-0800 (H) 255-1761 CELL

Address 1218 MARSHALL ST

City TUPELO State MS Zip 38804

Which best describes your primary interest?

Affected	Resident
Concerned	Business
Other _____	Landowner
	Other _____

What are the major issues?

Relocations	Noise
Wetlands	Safety
Wildlife	Social
Traffic Volume	Economics
Other _____	

MDOT is interested in your comments about the proposed project. Please indicate:

The alternative you like best and why: #1 NO CHANGE FROM PRESENT. (NO CONFLICT)  
#2 ALTERNATIVE L

Issues and/or concerns about the project: MONEY SPENT. LIFE CYCLE COSTS.

Recommendations for the project: POSTPONE PROJECT

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